



# THE FIRST GOLD RUSH

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## A MASTER PLAN FOR REED GOLD MINE

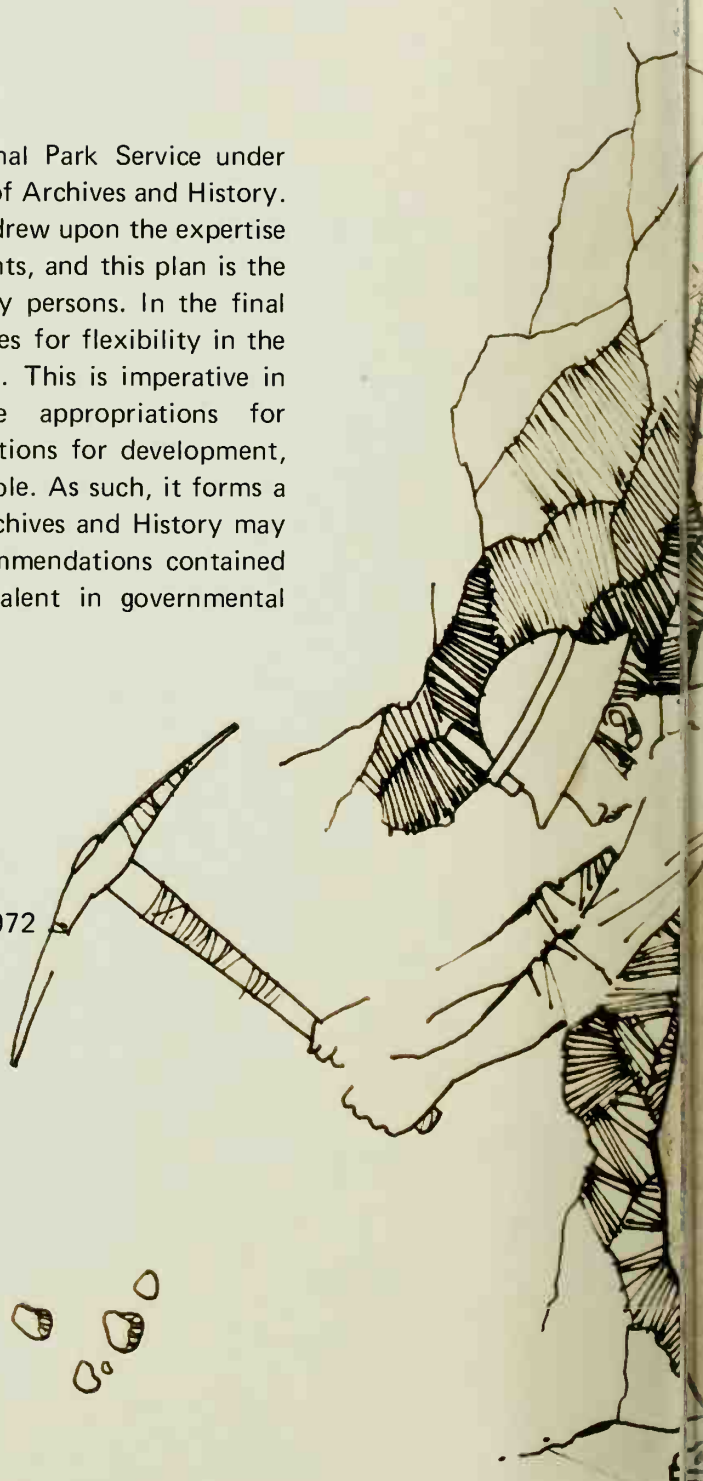
This Master Plan was prepared by the National Park Service under contract with the North Carolina Department of Archives and History. The National Park Service Planning Team also drew upon the expertise of others, both in Federal and State governments, and this plan is the result of observations and viewpoints of many persons. In the final analysis, it is a consensus report which provides for flexibility in the implementation of the suggested development. This is imperative in view of the dependence upon legislative appropriations for implementation. The plan seeks to map directions for development, recognizing that the ideal may not be achievable. As such, it forms a framework under which the Department of Archives and History may establish priorities based both upon the recommendations contained herein and the practical considerations prevalent in governmental administration.

Dr. H. G. Jones/Director  
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Approved:

Dr. H. G. Jones

January 1972





reed gold mine

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## PREFACE

The United States Department of the Interior in 1966 announced the eligibility of the Reed Gold Mine for the select company of National Historic Landmarks. About that time the State Department of Archives and History placed the property on its list of priority acquisitions. Plans for the preservation of the site would have been unsuccessful, however, without the encouragement and assistance of the Kelly heirs who in 1969 responded warmly to the Department's overtures. These heirs of Armin L. Kelly — his daughters, Alice Kelly Bayley and Ruth Ann Kelly, and his deceased son Jack's children, Linda Kelly and Armin M. Kelly — made possible State acquisition by donating 70 acres and selling the remaining approximately 752 acres for \$182,000.00, considerably below the officially appraised value. Upon request of the State Department of Archives and History, which is statutorily responsible for administering all State-owned historic and archaeological property in North Carolina, Governor Robert W. Scott and the Council of State allocated these acquisition funds on April 19, 1971. The deed recognizing formal State ownership was filed in the office of the Register of Deeds in the Cabarrus County Courthouse on December 31, 1971.



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Concord Public Library  
Concord, N. C.



*Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!  
Bright and yellow, hard and cold,  
Molten, graven, hammer'd, and roll'd;  
Heavy to get, and light to hold;  
Hoarded, barter'd, bought, and sold,  
Stolen, borrow'd, squander'd, doled:  
Spurn'd by the young, but hugg'd by the old  
To the very verge of the churchyard mould;  
Price of many a crime untold:  
Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!  
Good or bad a thousand-fold! . . . .*

*Thomas Hood*



# introduction

"Man, this is a *real* gold mine!"

Yes, in the rolling hills of Piedmont North Carolina, amidst the rubble of the past, lies an area rich in historical, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities. For it was here on the John Reed plantation, in 1799, that an event occurred which altered the course of American history.

Young Conrad Reed's discovery of a large, shiny rock in Little Meadow Creek in Cabarrus County was not immediately recognized as a historic moment. But by a fascinating chain of events, that lump came to be identified as containing almost pure gold, and the discovery resulted in the opening of the earliest documented gold mining operation in the present boundaries of the United States and led to the first gold rush in the Nation. Within a few years gold fever spread and the precious metal was discovered in surrounding areas. Until 1828 all of the native gold coined by the United States Mint came from North Carolina. From about 1830 until 1850, more North Carolinians worked at gold mining than any occupation other than farming. North Carolina's gold fever was abated only by the discovery of the precious metal in California in 1848.

Even so, the Reed Gold Mine — as well as many of the more than 700 other gold mines identifiable in North Carolina history — continued to operate intermittently until the twentieth century. Then a fortuitous absentee landlordship allowed the historic property to remain virtually undisturbed for more than half a century until, at last, through the cooperation and interest of the owners, it has now been acquired by the State of North Carolina for development by the Department of Archives and History as a State historic site. Reed Gold Mine will live again. Indeed, it will revive the story of what was once North Carolina's second most important industry.

The 822-acre site is within a region that is rapidly becoming urbanized and is adjacent to the second largest metropolitan center in North Carolina. The basic purpose for developing this property as a historic site is to generate in the minds and hearts of its visitors an awareness of the gold miner during the country's first gold rush, to deepen an understanding and appreciation of the life-style of those times, and to portray the part gold has played in the history of the western world.

The site also possesses great potential for informing visitors about archaeology, geology, natural history, and ecology. In addition, the location offers opportunities for other activities, such as picnicking, hiking, strolling, and bird-watching.

The following management objectives form the basis for this plan which advocates cooperative programs and planning ventures wherever and whenever possible:

- Develop a State historic site compatible with the Department of Archives and History's legal responsibility for acquiring and administering historic properties as set forth in Chapter 121, *General Statutes of North Carolina*.

- Provide adequate staff and facilities, including a visitor center-museum, to portray, through exhibits and audiovisuals, the story of gold mining in North Carolina and its relationship to gold mining in the western world.

- Accelerate research programs, both documentary and oral, to acquire increased knowledge of resources, forces, events, and personalities associated with the Reed Gold Mine in particular and gold mining in North Carolina in general.

- Undertake a comprehensive engineering survey and safety inspection of mine workings as a prerequisite to planning for the reopening of underground networks for visitor education and enjoyment.
- Inaugurate a comprehensive archaeological program designed to locate and yield information about nonexistent structures and facilities important to the story of the site.
- Conduct a study to determine (a) if additional land is needed for use in connection with the historic site or to serve as a buffer zone, and (b) what type of zoning, if any, is needed for surrounding properties.
- Locate, photograph, and acquire artifacts and equipment once used in gold mining operations and, where feasible, use them in the reestablishment of operating features in the site.
- Reconstruct, based upon research, those structures essential to the development of the site to portray its appearance in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.
- Allow visitors to experience, through “living interpretation,” various methods of mining and processing of gold ore used during the Reed Gold Mine’s more than one century of intermittent production.
- Ensure that all development is both aesthetically and ecologically compatible with the historical, cultural, and natural resources of the site.
- Restrict and rotate uses of the area to selected activities compatible with historical and ecological limitations through a careful and thorough evaluation of the resource.
- Provide the widest possible range of appropriate historical, cultural, and recreational opportunities, on a year-round, day-use basis, relevant to visitor needs.
- Explain how gold came to be concentrated in rich veins as at the Reed Mine, how gold is used as a standard in the international monetary system, and how and who used gold in jewelry, dentistry, electronics, etc.

■ Publish, in popular and scholarly form, narrative and pictorial works to tell the story of what was once North Carolina's second most important industry.

■ Allow the site to show not only the story of gold mining but also the environmental ethic — man's interdependence with the natural world — the "web of life."

■ Conduct a study, in cooperation with the State Department of Natural and Economic Resources, to determine if the eastern portion of the property might be transferred to that department for development as a State park for recreational purposes.

■ Coordinate development and management programs with other public and private agencies.

regional day use









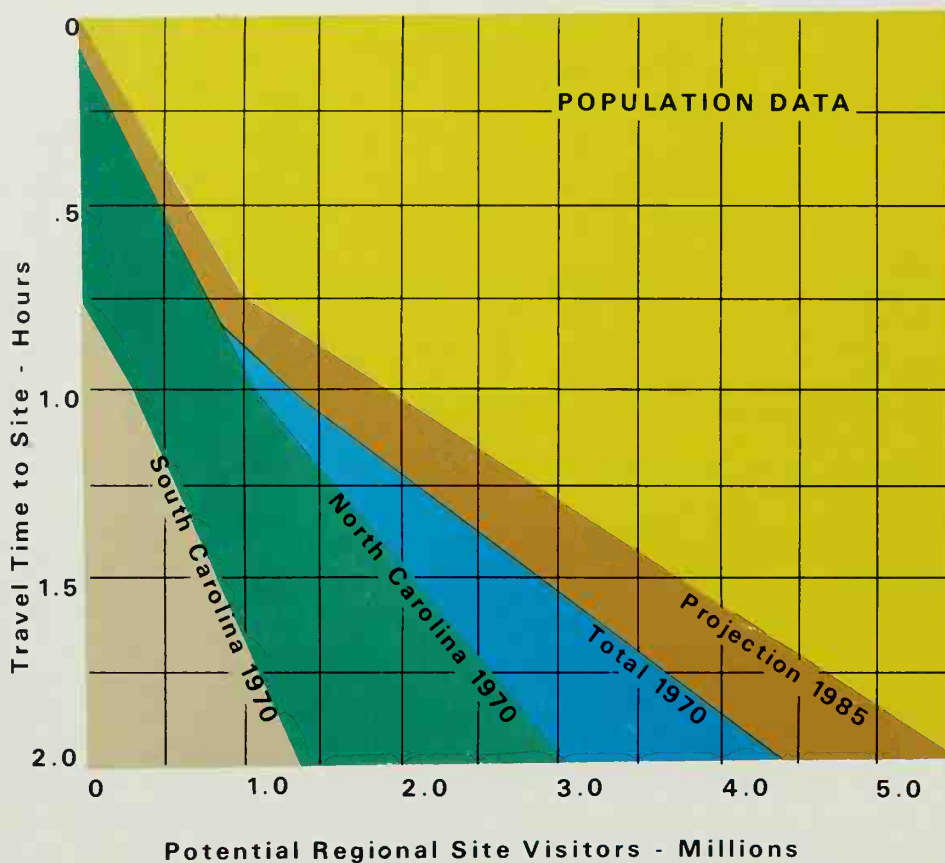


# the region

The Reed Gold Mine Region, for the purpose of this plan, is defined as all those counties wholly or partially within two and a half hours' auto travel time of the historic site. This region contains 61 counties and 4.4 million people in two States: North Carolina and South Carolina.

It was in this region that the first documented discovery of gold in the present boundaries of the United States occurred; it was here that all of the native gold in the country was mined until 1828; and the region remained the Nation's leading gold-producing area until the California discovery in 1848. Inasmuch as gold mining was once North Carolina's second most important industry, the region offers unexcelled opportunities for portraying this significant aspect of the State's history.

The area has undergone great change in the past two hundred years. Originally covered largely by hardwood forest, plots of land were first cleared around the middle of the eighteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, cattle were raised until the land became overgrazed. Toward the end of the century, cotton was the main cash crop. Later, in the 1930's, due to depletion of the land, low prices, and high labor costs, cotton production steadily decreased. Cleared fields often were abandoned, and fast-growing pines rapidly became dominant. In recent years, however, hardwoods have again become numerous, due to fire protection and extensive cutting of pines.



The economic base of the region has now shifted from agriculture to industry, thus drawing more people to such urban centers as Durham and Charlotte in North Carolina, and Greenville and Spartanburg in South Carolina. The region is within an ever-expanding belt of industry and urbanization that extends from Raleigh, North Carolina, southwesterly toward Atlanta, Georgia. Currently the region consists of medium-sized cities and small towns with only five cities exceeding 100,000 people.

This region now has a population of 4.4 million, an increase of 731,600 people (20 percent) since 1960. Most interesting is the predicted population jump for Mecklenburg County (Charlotte), which is within one-half hour's travel time from the site. This anticipated 40 percent population increase from 1970 to 1985 is double the rate predicted for the State of North Carolina. Also, seven of the ten Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas\* in North and South Carolina are within two and a half hours' driving distance of the site. They are Charlotte, Durham, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, and Raleigh, North Carolina; and Columbia and Greenville, South Carolina.

\* A Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area is a county or group of contiguous counties containing at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more, or "twin cities" with a combined population of at least 50,000.



As rapid growth in employment opportunities reverses the past trend of out-migration, population is expected to continue to grow at an increasing rate.

The economic impact of industrialism has resulted in an industrial income six times greater than that derived from the agrarian economy of the past. With strong industrial influences, the region is rapidly changing: today's rural lands will be the subdivisions of tomorrow. The projected population increase for the region – 24 percent in the next fifteen years – emphasizes this change.

As the economy and population grow, this historic site will become even more important to individual needs, because it will offer a combination of historical, natural, and recreational values. These values will involve educational and interpretive opportunities for many people in the urbanized area. As suburban sprawl eventually surrounds the mine, the value of the site to the quality of the urbanite's life should increase continually. This site must offer facilities to serve people both within and outside the region. Accordingly, a careful evaluation of existing facilities must be made to facilitate appropriate developmental plans to meet the needs of growing visitor use.

One factor to be considered in such an evaluation is the nature of the principal facilities for land transportation in this urbanizing region. The urban corridor generally follows the same alignment as Interstate 85, northeast-southwest. This route is an inland artery from Petersburg, Virginia, to Montgomery, Alabama, connecting such other major metropolitan centers as Durham, Greensboro and Charlotte, North Carolina; Spartanburg and Greenville, South Carolina; and Atlanta, Georgia. The corridor is intersected by Interstate 26 at Spartanburg, and the proposed Interstate 77 at Charlotte, twenty-five miles from the Reed Mine. These two routes will be the major links between two other important interstate highways that serve the region. Interstate 95, the coastal route, runs from Maine to Florida, and Interstate 40, from California to North Carolina. Interstates 26 and 77 have the added importance of being the connecting links between the Appalachian Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. This network of highways brings an annual influx of 20 million tourists from Canada and the northeastern United States in search of history, southern hospitality, sunshine, and recreation.

Within this region there are many publicly owned “open space” areas, including five State historic sites, fifteen State parks, four national parks, three national forests, and several privately owned developments (see Regional Resource map, opposite page).

The public areas to the south and east of Charlotte are predominantly day-use areas, while those to the north and west have longer-use patterns. The many lakes and rivers offer opportunities such as boating, water skiing, fishing, and sightseeing. Winter skiing is also becoming popular. In addition, many other features, both natural and historical, provide possibilities for educational and recreational developments, many of which can be supported with Federal or State funds. Four major proposed developments in the region are the Clinchfield Reservoir and Crowders Mountain State parks, the Fort Dobbs State Historic Site, and the Appalachian Foothills Highway. Private facilities that offer additional services are being developed rapidly.

# the region



## STATE AND FEDERAL PARKS

- 1 — ANOREW JACKSON HISTORIC STATE PARK
  - 2 — CHERAW STATE PARK
  - 3 — CHESTER STATE PARK
  - 4 — CROFT STATE PARK
  - 5 — OUKE POWER STATE PARK
  - 6 — GUILFORD COURTHOUSE NAT'L. MIL. PARK
  - 7 — HANGING ROCK STATE PARK
  - 8 — JONES LAKE STATE PARK
  - 9 — KINGS MTN. STATE PARK AND NAT'L. MIL. PARK
  - 10 — LEE STATE PARK
  - 11 — MORROW MTN. STATE PARK
  - 12 — MT. MITCHELL STATE PARK
  - 13 — MT. JEFFERSON STATE PARK
  - 14 — PARIS MTN. STATE PARK
  - 15 — PILOT MTN. STATE PARK
  - 16 — PLEASANT RIOGE STATE PARK
  - 17 — POINSETT STATE PARK
  - 18 — SANOHILLS RECREATION AREA
  - 19 — SESOUICENTENNIAL STATE PARK
  - 20 — SINGLETARY LAKE GROUP CAMP
  - 21 — STONE MTN. STATE PARK
  - 22 — WILLIAM B. UMSTEO STATE PARK
  - 23 — WEYMOUTH WOOS NATURE PRESERVE
- \* S.H.S. — State Historic Site

The whole region is rich in historical significance as well as recreational opportunities. The area surrounding the Reed Gold Mine was first settled largely by German immigrants, and more than any other region of North Carolina, the influence of the German settlers may still be seen. From 1776 to the close of the Revolutionary War many important battles were fought in the Piedmont sections of both North and South Carolina.

Following the achievement of independence, North Carolina continued its important role in legislative and economic affairs as one of the original 13 States. North Carolina owned western lands as did Maryland, Virginia, and most other seaboard States. Before gold was discovered in the United States, North Carolina was one of the few States which were able to maintain a stable currency.

The discovery of gold in 1799 brought national attention and thousands of new residents to the area in the first half of the nineteenth century. Again, during the Civil War, the Carolinas became a battleground of fierce military events—historical milestones in a struggling young country. The modest development of the textile industry after the Civil War led in the present century to a heavy concentration of that industry in the “Piedmont Crescent,” as the area along Interstate 85 from Durham to Gastonia is now called.

These historical and natural resources and their related development, combined with their proximity to urban population centers and the interstate highway network, will attract thousands of visitors to the region.

Although the Reed Gold Mine is readily accessible to the entire region, development and operation will have the most immediate impact on four North Carolina counties: Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Stanly, and Union. Conversely, the development plans, zoning, and building codes of these counties will have the strongest effect on the character of the historic site. These counties and the State of North Carolina are encouraged to work together in formulating a land-use plan for the entire area. Otherwise, uncontrolled urban sprawl, poor road systems, and polluted air and water may destroy the existing character of the land.



Flood plains, steep hillsides, and other land unsuitable for development should be maintained and operated as open space through public acquisition or appropriate zoning. This land could then be used for recreation and/or conservation.

Although the region is well endowed with high density recreation areas (Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Class I), it has less than its proportionate share of General Recreation Areas (BOR Class II), Natural Areas (BOR Class III) and Historic-Cultural Areas (BOR Class VI). The proposed development at the Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site will fill a portion of this void.





## HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Gold has been a magic word throughout much of our history. "Gold, God, and Glory" were foremost in the minds of the Spanish conquistadores as they explored the New World. Many of the first English adventurers who came to North America also were motivated by a desire to find gold. Although there were stories that the Spanish from Florida had found gold in the southern Piedmont, the English failed to locate these places as they made their way toward the Appalachians. If a lucky few discovered a nugget of gold from time to time, sources were not exploited, nor were they popularly recorded.

The first gold rush in the United States occurred a few years after the discovery, in 1799, of a hunk of "heavy yellow" metal in or along Little Meadow Creek in Cabarrus County, North Carolina, by Conrad Reed, aged 12. Conrad was one of three boys and five girls born to John Reed, a former Hessian soldier who had been brought to the Colonies to help suppress the Revolution. Reed had deserted King George III's forces instead, and had made his way northward from South Carolina to what was then Mecklenburg County. Here he had married Sarah Keiser (or Kisor) and accumulated through time a large farm. It was not, however, until 1802, three years after his son had found the "heavy yellow rock," that Reed learned that it was gold. The rock, described as being the size of a small smoothing iron and weighing about 17 pounds, had been used as a doorstop in the Reed home. Later a Fayetteville jeweler gave Reed \$3.50 for the nugget, worth thousands. These events were to have important repercussions for Reed, his family, his county, his State, and the Nation, because they focused attention on the region and resulted in this country's first gold rush.

Reed and three others began prospecting Little Meadow Creek in Cabarrus County and found nuggets in the gravel in and near the stream. His partners advanced capital, both money and labor, and Reed received one-fourth of the gold found. Although the mine was operated only during the seasons when there was no field work for the slaves, the proprietors realized a substantial profit for a time.

A number of nuggets and a good quantity of dust were recovered in the auriferous sands along the stream. In 1803 there was wild excitement when a slave recovered a lump of gold weighing 28 pounds from a place on the northwest side of the "lake" (a wide place in Little Meadow Creek). Other discoveries followed as methods of working the placers became more sophisticated. At first the miners (often slaves belonging to the partners) had roved the bottoms digging up "stones, clay, &c. and picked up what they could find." Next they began washing the sand in frying pans, but by the summer of 1805 they were employing rockers — "boxes of convenient size, with tin bottoms, made full of holes, which are placed on steel sliders, in larger boxes. . . ." Portable pumps then poured water on the sand and clay. As the grit slid backward and forward, small particles of gold fell through the holes with the sand into the box below, and the gravel remained in the box above. By 1806, the miners had erected a small still and were employing mercury to separate the finer particles of gold from the sand. Mercury will amalgamate with gold and silver while rejecting lesser minerals. When it is used to collect gold, the gold and any silver are removed by using heat to evaporate off the mercury.

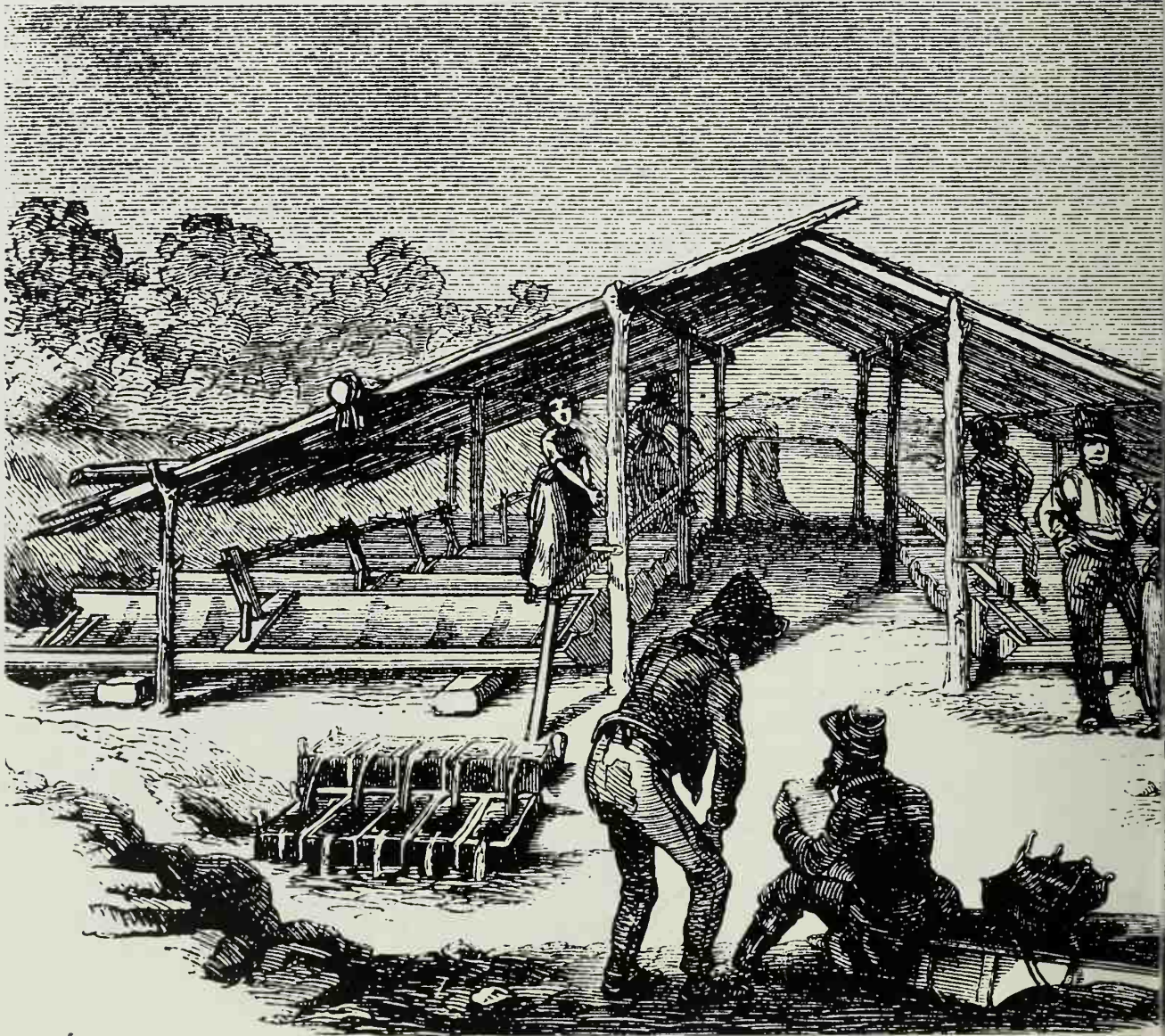
The successful mining operations on the Reed plantation naturally caused great excitement in the area, and neighbors began prospecting their own lands. Many were successful, and soon other mines — such as the Parker, Harris, and Phoenix — were in operation. Elias Boudinot, Director of the United States Mint, in 1804 called the attention of President Thomas Jefferson to the recent events — events that would mean so much to the struggling young Nation which theretofore had depended solely upon foreign countries for its sources of gold. William Thornton, architect of the Nation's capitol, sought an option on lands surrounding Reed's acreage and established the North Carolina Gold Mining Company. His grandiose plan failed because landowners, dreaming of striking it rich themselves, declined to sell their property, and because President Jefferson appointed Thornton to head the Patent Office.



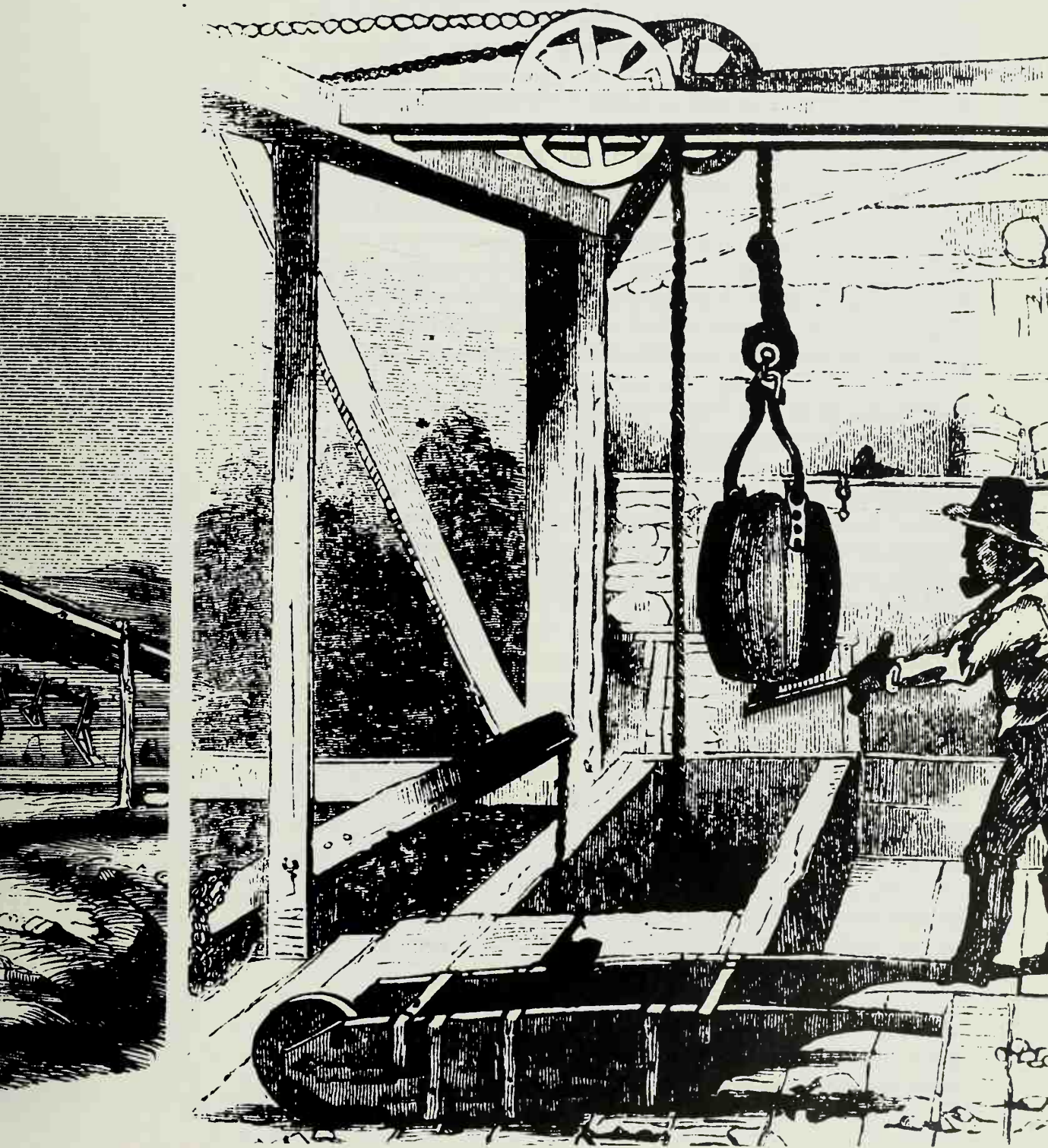




Two decades later, in the mid-1820's, as more sophisticated methods of mining were introduced to the region, shafts were sunk at nearby mines to tap veins of ore. Separating the gold from the quartz in which it was found required huge Chilean grinding stones, bigger rockers, and retorts. The larger capital investments and returns were publicized, thousands of people headed for the diggings, and our Nation's first gold rush was on. Companies were organized, boom towns sprang up, and the economy of the area throbbed.







Gold from the Reed and other North Carolina mines found its way to the Philadelphia mint and into the Nation's coinage, to Europe, and into industrial circles. This precious metal was also used unminted as a medium of exchange throughout the Piedmont.

Although shafts had been sunk to exploit the veins at some of the other North Carolina mines in the mid-1820's, it was 1831 before the first shaft was sunk at the Reed mine to tap the veins from which the deposit gold had been washed by the elements. This initial shaft was very productive — it alone is said to have yielded from \$18,000 to \$20,000 worth of gold — and many others subsequently were sunk at the Upper and Lower Hill workings. The gold-bearing quartz ore mined from the shafts was crushed either by the huge grinding wheels of the Chilean mill or by the iron heads of the stamp mill. The gold then was removed from the crushed quartz by the use of rockers and mercury.

In 1834 the aging John Reed entered into an agreement under which his sons and sons-in-law would provide labor for the mining operations; as landowner, he would get one-third of the income and his partners would share the other two-thirds. Late that year, however, a dispute arose when a 13-pound nugget was recovered, and the ensuing ten-year litigation prevented full exploitation of the Reed mine. Sarah Reed died in 1843, and the former Hessian soldier, who had finally become an American citizen in 1842, died in 1845. Both were buried on the eastern slope of Mansion Hill, and the obscure cemetery forms a valuable asset to the historic site.

In accordance with John Reed's will, his plantation was sold following his death. The new owners were his grandson, Timothy, and his son-in-law, Andrew Hartsell. Another son-in-law, George Barnhardt, had already begun a profitable mining operation at nearby Gold Hill, a site that emerged as North Carolina's most famous "boom town" in the gold mining region.

In 1848 national attention was drawn to California and soon thereafter to the Rocky Mountains. North Carolina's long hegemony in gold mining had ended, but the search went on.

Timothy Reed and Andrew Hartsell failed to profit from the property, and it changed hands a number of times. In 1853 Emmer Graham and James W. Osborn acquired it and formed the Reed Gold and Copper



Mining Company. Their ambitious plans encountered the same economic problems – low-grade ore compared with the western ore, high cost of extraction, and water shortages – and even capital improvements failed to stabilize the operation. It was during the Graham-Osborn ownership that August Partz, mining engineer and assistant to the editor of the *Mining Magazine*, visited the mine and published in that journal the most instructive report ever prepared on the property. His detailed map, showing the buildings and underground workings, remains the most valuable contemporary documentation of the Reed Gold Mine.

Following dissolution of the Reed Gold and Copper Mining Company, the property was split up and sold to several individuals. After the Civil War, however, William L. Hirst of Philadelphia succeeded in buying up all of the original John Reed land and brought James P. Bruner from Philadelphia to conduct mining operations. In 1875 success was being reported, including the recovery of one nugget worth more than \$2,000. During this period of ownership by Hirst and his son, Anthony, hydraulic mining was considered for the Dry Hollow (between Upper and Middle Hills), but water to exploit these "rich alluvial deposits" was the major problem. Little Meadow Creek is virtually dry during parts of the year; and, though Rocky River and Buffalo Creek were potential water sources, necessary capital was not forthcoming to harness their power.

Profit margins remained slight, and on January 10, 1895, Anthony Hirst sold the original Reed property plus one additional small tract to Oliver S. Kelly, O. Warren Kelly, and Dr. Justin D. Lisle of Springfield, Ohio. Dr. Lisle reopened the mine, and in 1895 "some prospecting and development work" was done. An old shaft on Lower Hill was retimbered; the west and south sides of Lower Hill and both banks of Little Meadow Creek "opened up for placer work," and a shaft "sunk near the western limit of the property," opening "a large body of low-grade ore that is said to assay \$7.50 per ton in free gold, and \$11.55 per ton of gold in sulphurets."

course of silver lead  
and sulfuret vein  
partially  
reconnoitared-1870

shallow flat-  
well timbered

flat-slate ridge-  
cropping of copper  
vein unexplored-1870

In the 1870's the ground  
between the LITTLE MEADOW  
CREEK and the YELLOW  
BRANCH was grown up in  
fields pines of mine  
timbar size.

In the 1870's the ground  
east of the YELLOW  
BRANCH was heavily  
wooded with oak  
and pine.

scale in feet

0 285 570 1140



#### Conventional Symbols

- creeks
- intermittent watercourses
- hills, bluffs, elevations
- roads-1854-1923
- rail fences-1870's
- cemetery
- houses, cabins, mills-1854-1923
- building-extent
- mining shafts
- entrance to tunnels
- whim houses-1854
- saw mill area

Sources for Map: August Pertz's 1854 map, map, circa 1870  
Map of Reed Mining Property, 1923, 1971 survey of the Reed Gold Mine  
Property of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History; Deed of Conveyance  
to Armin Kelly from O S. Kelly Co.; personal reconaissance of area, shafts and  
tunnels October 25-27 1971.

## HISTORICAL BASE MAP CABARRUS COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

- |                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 German                       | 20 Arthur       |
| 2 Miners' Houses               | 21 Stables      |
| 3 Circa 1905 structures        | 22 Office       |
| 4 Armstrong                    | 23 Shop         |
| 5 Graham                       | 24 Office Kelly |
| 8 Osborne                      | 25 Stamp Mill   |
| 7 Bigger                       | 26 Eagle        |
| 8 Genet                        | 27 Frederick    |
| 9 Ervin                        | 28 Tunnel III   |
| 10 Timothy                     | 29 Sider        |
| 11 shaft with extensive tunnel | 30 Tunnel       |
| 12 Morgan                      | 31 Pigeon       |
| 13 Engine House Shaft          | 32 Bird         |
| 14 Mill and Engine House       | 33 Gilbert      |
| 15 Powder House                | 34 Posselt      |
| 16 Creton                      | 35 Tunnel I     |
| 17 Tunnel-open 1934-1971       | 36 Brown        |
| 18 Linker                      | 37 Harrison     |
| 19 Hertsell                    | 38 Tunnel II    |



Inside of a year a discovery occurred in Dry Hollow which again focused attention on the Reed Mine. On Thursday, April 9, 1896, in a placer at a depth of 3-1/2 feet, a nugget weighing nearly 23 pounds troy and measuring 10 inches in length and 4 inches in diameter, was found. Before the prize was stored in the vault of the Concord National Bank, it was weighed out to be 17 pounds in pure gold and was valued at \$4,866.

This discovery encouraged the partners to make capital improvements. Heavy machinery was purchased; a ten-stamp mill, crusher, and steam pump were put into operation. From 1896 through 1901 the Kelly Company continued to exploit the mine. The placers were worked in a "small way" and some quartz mining was done, but with the wild stampedes to the Klondike in 1897-98, Atlin in 1899, and Nome in 1900, the attention of capitalists, miners, and the public was focused on the Yukon and Alaska. There was no incentive for the Kellys to spend more money on a mine promising small returns on their capital invested. By 1903 the Reed Mine had been closed, to reopen only briefly in 1911-12, when the placers and old dumps were worked.

## 1854-1971

### AROLINA

- 39 Gold Mill-circa 1848
- 40 Reed Mansion
- 41 Barn
- 42 Reed Cemetery
- 43 Jesse Cox-1889

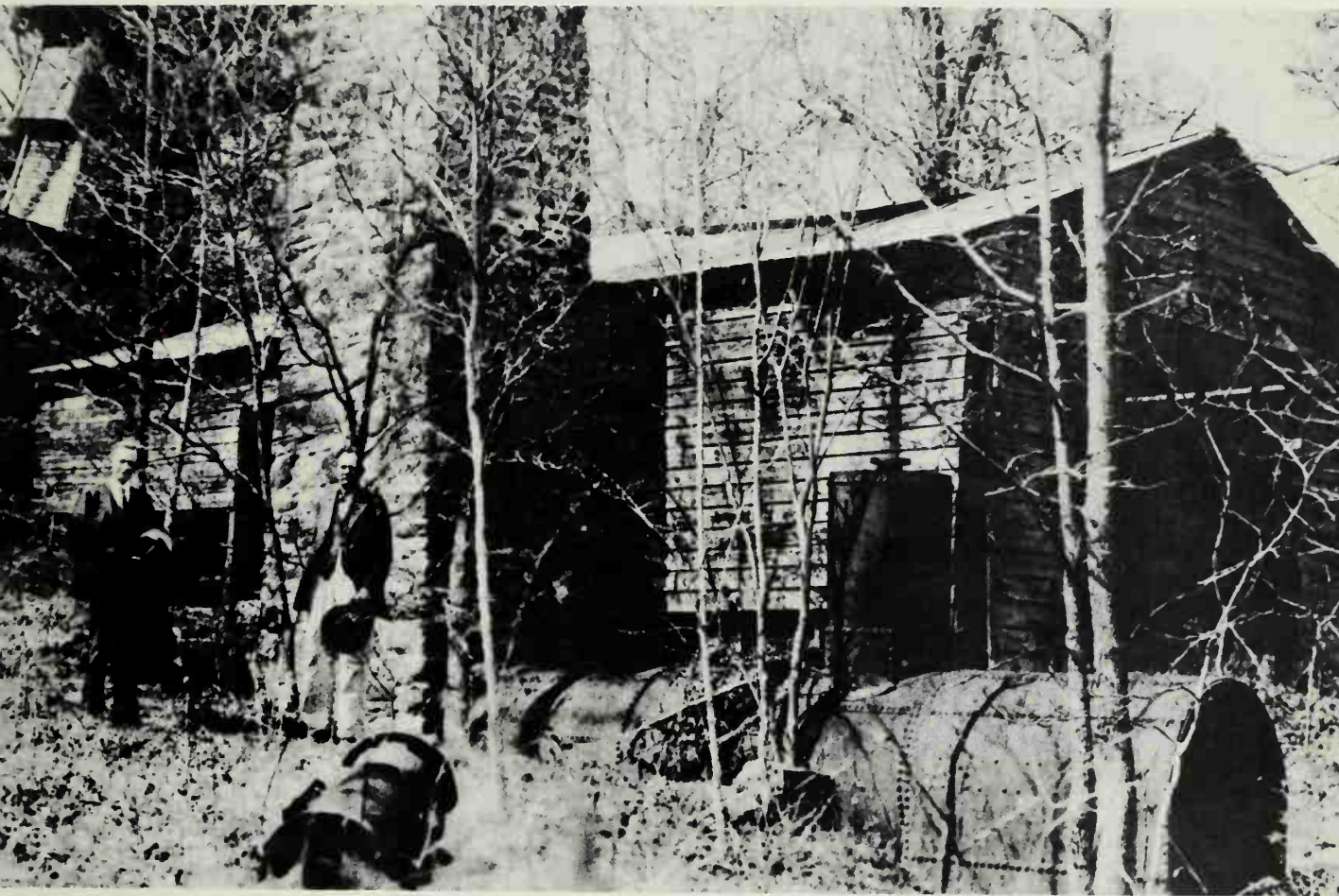




For the next 22 years, there apparently was no serious mining at the Reed. In 1934, however, with the Nation in the grips of a world-wide depression and encouraged by an increase in the price of gold from \$20.67 to \$35.00 per ounce, a few unemployed miners reopened the placers, and several small nuggets were found. With pan and barrel rocker similar to those used a century earlier, a miner might recover in a day gold worth fifty cents. The hard work and small return soon drove the miners into other activities or onto relief rolls, and the Reed again closed, never to reopen commercially.

It will, however, be reopened as a State historic site, for the property remained in the hands of the Kelly family until December 31, 1971, when it became the property of the State of North Carolina — again by a fortunate chain of circumstances.





Ownership was transferred to the O. S. Kelly Company in 1921 and to Armin L. Kelly in 1950. The original "mansion house" of John Reed and the other early buildings had all rotted down, and newer buildings had been erected from time to time. Around 1910 a substantial house was built for a tenant, but in recent years it too has deteriorated beyond salvation. Inasmuch as the Kellys held on to the property largely for sentimental reasons, only a few fields were rented out. The result was fortunate, because the property has in the main been allowed to lie fallow, and nature has taken its course. Although little is left except the tunnels, shafts, and foundations to remind one of the days of glory for the Reed Gold Mine, the property has escaped the terrors of the bulldozer and modern intrusions. Here, surrounded by paved roads and modern homes, lies the unspoiled plantation of John Reed

with its boundaries almost unchanged since 1845 when the old German was buried upon it. Flora and fauna have grown without interference of man, and here on the border between busy Cabarrus and Stanly counties one can return to nature – and, in a few years, to the “golden” days of the Reed Gold Mine.

Until the discovery of gold at Sutter’s Mill and the wild rush to California in 1848-49, North Carolina was the Nation’s principal gold producing State. Other rich strikes in the West followed, and the North Carolina mines were practically deserted within a few years. Many miners who stampeded to the western gold fields and silver lodes, however, had learned their skills in North Carolina and the mountains of north Georgia. The rich Cherry Creek, Colorado, strike was made by disappointed North Carolinians enroute home from California. All this happened many decades after the Nation’s first gold rush was set up by Conrad Reed’s discovery in 1799.

The Reed Mine, site of the first discovery of gold in the United States, assumes a significance out of proportion to the value of the precious nuggets, grains, and ore torn from Little Meadow Creek and the adjoining hills. The Reed Mine was the seed from which the country’s gold mining industry and subsequent gold rushes germinated.

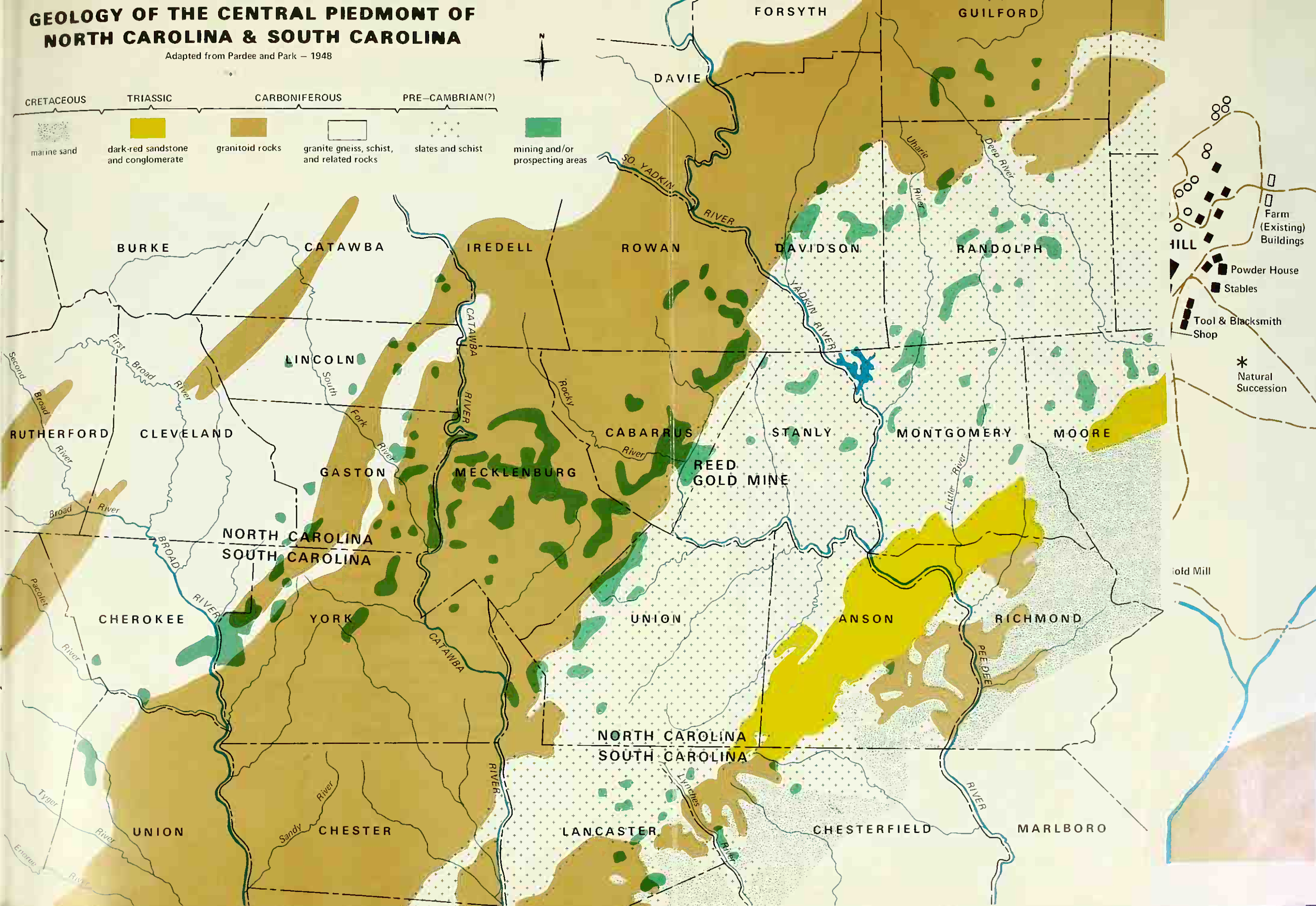
## NATURAL RESOURCES

Throughout the Piedmont, a unique geological history explains the presence of numerous and varied mineral deposits. Basement rocks were altered due to intense pressure and heat during the period of mountain-building which culminated in the uplift of the Appalachian Mountains about 200 million years ago. The present-day Appalachians are the eroded remnants of these once-majestic peaks which towered to Andean heights. Folding and alteration of rock strata occurred throughout the region but were greatest in parts of the eastern Appalachian Mountains and the Piedmont. Lava flows and subsurface igneous intrusions were common. As molten rocks cooled, the component chemical elements crystallized out in relation to the rate of cooling and the particular chemistry of the materials. In some areas, conditions favored the concentration of minerals bearing large amounts of gold, silver, iron, copper, lead, tungsten, and other economically important materials. The discovery of these valuable ores led to a



# GEOLOGY OF THE CENTRAL PIEDMONT OF NORTH CAROLINA & SOUTH CAROLINA

Adapted from Pardee and Park — 1948



century of exploitation of the land's vast mineral resources, both in the vicinity of the site and throughout the Piedmont Region.

Existing shafts, tunnels, and excavations at the historic site provide excellent opportunities for the study of regional geology and mineralogy, as well as the history and significance of the mining industry in the Carolinas and the Piedmont.

The biological resources of the site's 822 acres are also an asset. As natural sanctuaries for the protection and observation of the plants and animals of the Carolina Piedmont become progressively fewer and more difficult to acquire, these resources will increase in value.

The Reed Gold Mine property contains most of the principal vegetation types of the Piedmont and is a remarkable natural laboratory for the study of changes in plant and animal communities following logging or long-term fallowing of cropland. The site contains plowed fields, early oldfields, late oldfields with scattered shortleaf pines, pine forests, mixed pine-hardwood forests. Each vegetational type has its own peculiar community of plants and animals which interact with each other and with the physical environment to form a diverse series of ecosystems. One of management's goals should be to maintain and increase this diversity. Local schools and colleges should be encouraged to use the site extensively in connection with studies in natural history, geology, and the biological sciences.

So far, there is little evidence of pollution of the site; however, runoff from recently-fertilized croplands upstream may contribute to periodic nutrient enrichment during heavy spring rains. No evidence of recent algal blooms was found and no eutrophication problems have been reported. In view of the very light development within the three small watersheds, the quality of both surface and ground water is probably satisfactory. Similarly, the absence of significant industrialization and vehicular traffic suggests that air quality is also good.

A more detailed inventory of natural resources and environmental additions is presented in the resource document (Gregg, W. P., Jr., Preliminary Environmental Inventory of Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site, Cabarrus County, North Carolina, 1972) on file in the North Carolina Department of Archives and History.





### VEGETATION MAP

- Broomsedge-Aster-Goldenrod Oldfields
- Shortleaf Pine Forest
- Shortleaf Pine-Mixed Hardwood Forest
- White Oak-Red Oak-Sweet Gum Forest
- Acquisition or Protective Zoning
- Dirt Road





# the plan

## PLANNING APPROACH

The North Carolina Department of Archives and History proposes to develop the historic area of the Reed Gold Mine property into a State historic site. It will become the seventeenth site in a Statewide system designed to preserve and interpret important and representative properties for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations.

A typical State historic site, in addition to the preserved historic property, consists of a visitor center-museum providing administrative facilities, a museum, and an auditorium for meetings and audiovisual presentations; a site manager's residence; a maintenance area; and pathways with outdoor markers where needed. An on-site staff maintains the property and provides visitor orientation.

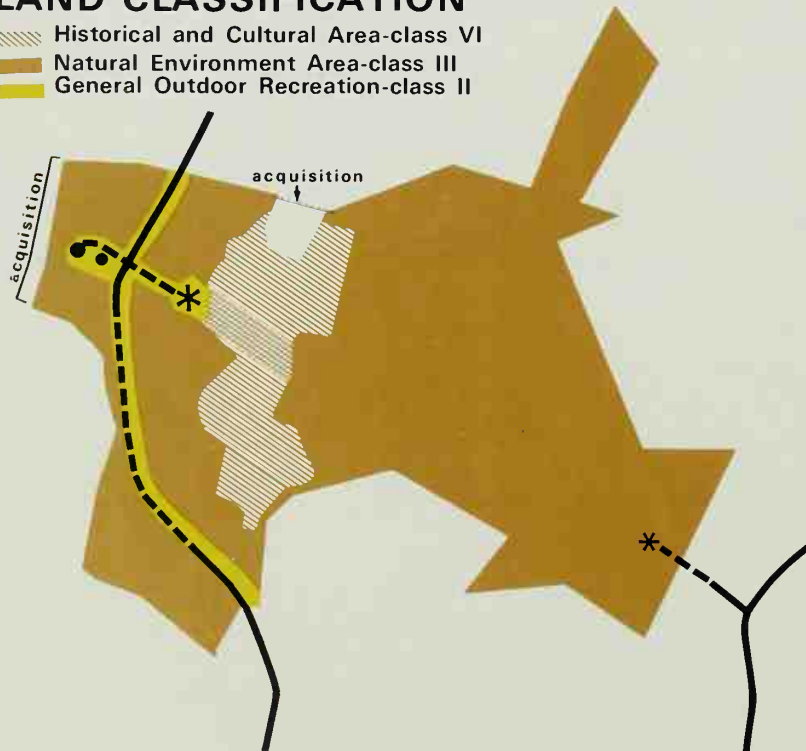
Each historic site has a major theme. The major theme of the Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site will be North Carolina's role in the history of gold mining, with the Reed Gold Mine property serving as the authentic "laboratory" for telling the story. Exhibits and audiovisuals will be used to interpret the roles of other North Carolina mines, the United States Branch Mint at Charlotte, and the private mint of the Bechtlers at Rutherfordton, as well as to portray the nature and uses of gold and the broader story of the importance of gold mining in the history of the western world.



This master plan envisions the provision of oral and visual interpretation of these subjects within the visitor center-museum, after which visitors will follow marked routes to the Reed Mine site which, when developed in accordance with the recommendations of this plan, will provide "living interpretation" of the gold mining story as it actually occurred at the site of the first documented discovery of gold in the United States and during the following century. It is understood from the outset that development of the physical features of the site must proceed upon the basis of professional research, for the Department of Archives and History has a paramount responsibility to the citizens of the State to portray history as it was rather than how it might have been. To carry out this responsibility, extensive archaeological investigation will be required to supplement documentary and oral research.

## LAND CLASSIFICATION

-  Historical and Cultural Area-class VI
-  Natural Environment Area-class III
-  General Outdoor Recreation-class II





The history of gold mining, however, cannot be told effectively without going somewhat beyond the Department of Archives and History's traditional avoidance of natural history. The story involves areas of natural history that may be outside the present competence of the department's own staff, and assistance from other agencies appears to be in order. The Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site, therefore, should incorporate both cultural and natural resources to demonstrate the interrelated, interacting, and interdependent "web of life" of which mankind is also a part. Too often man has considered himself outside and above this system and has allowed development, location, form, and growth to be overly guided by economic determinants. Gold must be shown as both a natural and a cultural resource if the interpretation of the site is to be complete. This plan, accordingly, proposes a resource-related method for public use, development, and interpretation. Today's society has created a demand for a great variety of programs and facilities. These should be planned and implemented relative to the historical, cultural, and natural resources available.

The preparation of the master plan has been complicated by a decision yet to be made: whether several hundred acres of the Reed property are to be made available to the State Department of Natural and Economic Resources for future development into a State park. Inasmuch as the eastern portion of the Reed plantation, based on available information, appears to have played no direct part in the gold-mining operations, it can be separated from the historic area without adversely affecting the historic site. Perhaps as much as 400 acres can thus be set aside for a State park or for other State use; and if this transfer is made, the historic site may be at least partially relieved of obligations that it otherwise will have for furnishing recreational opportunities (environmental day—use, nature trails, etc.). The Department of Archives and History is favorable toward such a transfer. Because this is a matter to be determined hereafter, however, this master plan incorporates recommendations for certain minimal recreational facilities that will not put the Department of Archives and History into a competitive position in relation to any other future State undertaking.

With these considerations in mind, the demands of the people who will use the resources have been analyzed, as well as the ability of the resource to withstand use. A detailed study was conducted of certain

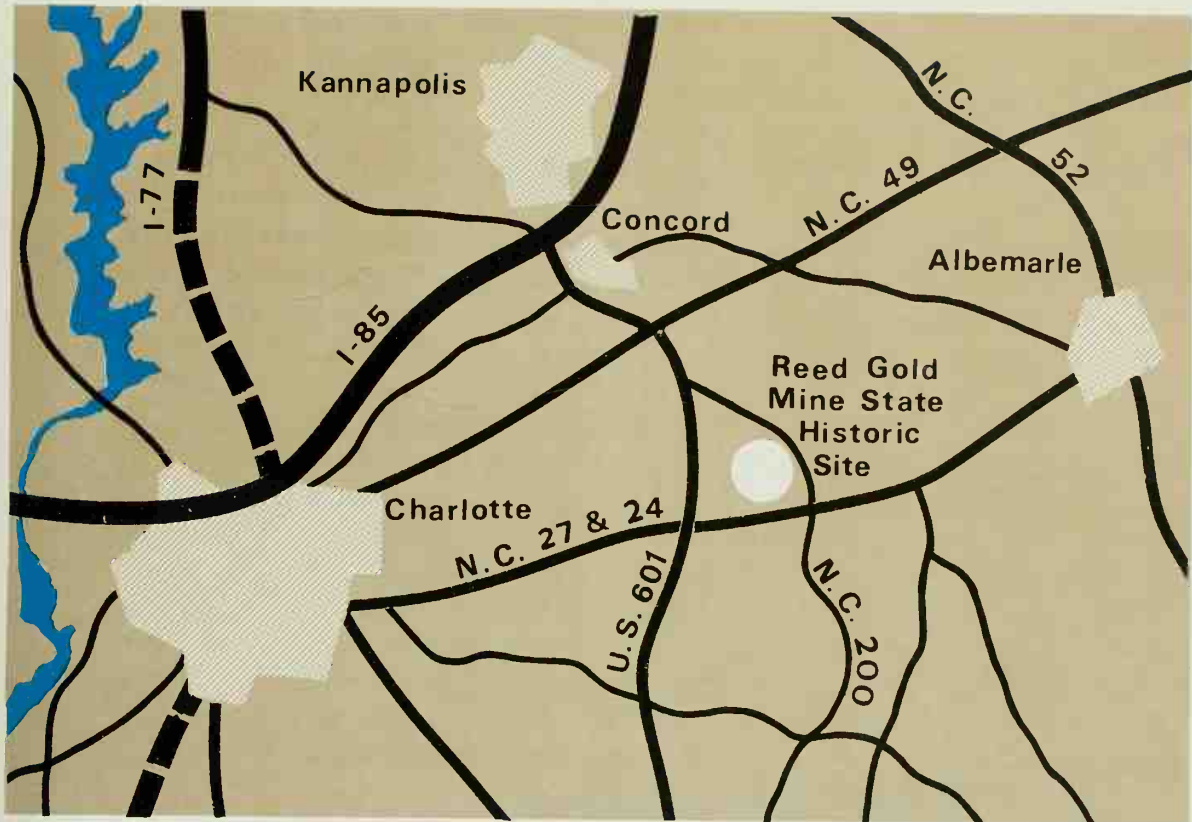
ecological determinants: geologic factors, soils, slopes, drainage patterns, vegetative cover, and animal life. These determinants indicated that development and subsequent management must be guided by certain constraints. Foremost among these is the need to disperse people and activities in order to minimize damage to fragile soil and vegetal cover. While the plan attempts to achieve this dispersal as much as possible, management must monitor the actual effects. Carrying capacities must be established for all areas, and when the capacities are exceeded, further dispersal should be initiated.

## ACCESS

The Reed Gold Mine is approximately twenty miles southeast of Interstate 85, one of the heaviest-traveled routes in the State. It is a principal inland artery connecting such metropolitan centers as Atlanta, Georgia, with Charlotte and Durham, North Carolina. In addition, the site is only twenty-five miles east of Charlotte, the second largest metropolitan area in North Carolina.

Most visitors will approach the site via U.S. 601, N.C. 200, and/or N.C. 24/27, because of their proximity to Charlotte and the interstate highway network (Interstate 85 and proposed 77). All of these roads are adequate to handle the anticipated visitor traffic as far as they go, except that N.C. 200 is in need of realigning and widening. To arrive at the site itself visitors must, however, take either Reed Mine Road (S.R. 1100) or Church Road. Both of these roads should be realigned and upgraded to handle the traffic generated by the historic site as well as expected development surrounding it. These routes would then serve as the main arteries to the site.

The site now has a total of three access points (including an old, single-lane dirt road). It is recommended that all these entrances be closed, with the exception of the one turning out of Reed Mine Road (S.R. 1100), in order to control access and dispersal, to simplify information services, and to improve management and protection of the property's resources. This one entrance to the site would guide visitors to a complex which would, in turn, serve as a hub to disperse visitors throughout the site. However, as the region's population grows, expanding the need for education and recreation, a secondary access point will be required, and the State should now secure an easement for that purpose in the eastern section.



The proposed principal access, as well as all buildings, parking areas, utilities, and other manmade facilities have been placed in accordance with ecological determinants to impose minimum impact upon the resources of the site, consistent with visitor use.

### VISITOR USE CONCEPTS

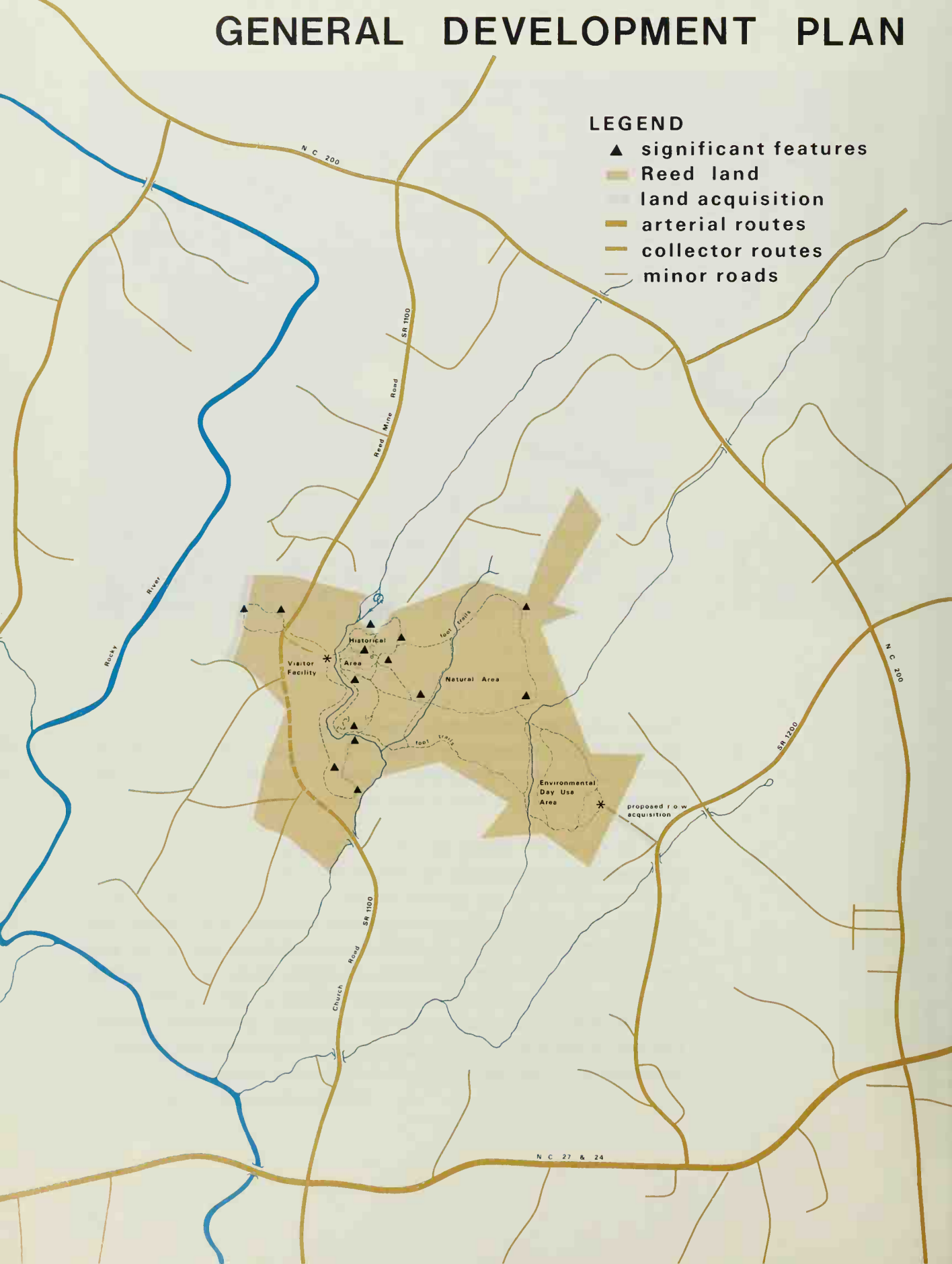
Demands for educational and recreational activities in the region are enormous. These demands are diverse and undoubtedly include the entire spectrum of education, fun, and leisure. Therefore, a complete analysis and assessment of the forms of education and recreation now available throughout the region will determine alternatives needed. From these alternatives, the most appropriate use of the site's specific resource may be determined.



# GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## LEGEND

- ▲ significant features
- Reed land
- land acquisition
- arterial routes
- collector routes
- minor roads



The Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site is a day-use area with anticipated heavy visitation during summer weekends. A typical visitor will arrive between 11 a.m. and noon and have available between one and six hours in the site. The concept of decentralization is based on this time span and the limited carrying capacity of this fragile resource.

It is known that people come to historic sites in small groups, but upon leaving their mechanical means of transportation, they tend to cluster if given the opportunity. People in large groups would destroy much of that prime, intangible resource which they came to enjoy. Consequently, dispersal of most activities within the site is recommended. This management concept of decentralization allows for those visitors who want to cluster as well as for those who do not wish to do so.

This site offers the opportunity of demonstrating and interpreting a remarkable facet of our cultural heritage. The importance of a century and a half of gold mining operations in this region to the history of North Carolina and our Nation should be stressed as the major theme in the Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site. There is a secondary theme which should, however, also be stressed: that of the total significance of man and the land — opportunities for greater awareness of human history, natural history, and the environment.

The interpretive and management programs should relate the history of gold mining to the environmental ethic — man's interdependence in the natural world. To the earliest Americans on this land, the earth was the origin of all life. To cut into the earth was not a thing to be done lightly. Interpretation for the site should point to the changes wrought in the land and note that the scars on this ground are healing and that nature is actually reclaiming its own.

The mines and the historic section bespeak only one aspect — albeit a stellar one — of the story of the land. There is space here for visitors to recreate and learn something about the world around them. Interpretive programs for the site should include aspects of cultural history, natural history, and environmental values peculiar to the region.

The primary purpose of the site should be, however, to demonstrate the living history of North Carolina gold mining. Thus the site's mission must go beyond certain abstract truths to deal with concrete realities

that the visitor can experience, feel, touch, and smell. Otherwise, a gold museum could be located anywhere in North Carolina. Accordingly, it will be inadequate merely to tell the visitor what placer mining was like. He should be able to watch it being performed — perhaps even participate in it. It will not be enough to lead him to the opening of a mine shaft and explain to him, via an interpretive marker or personal commentary, how the miners entered the shaft and extracted the gold. The visitor himself should be allowed to enter a mine tunnel and perhaps exit from a shaft. It will be of little value to point out where a gold processing mill once stood. The mill should look like it did when operational and reveal to visitors what happened to the gold ore taken from the mines. The obliterated sites of the miners' cabins will have little meaning. Replaced — or at least their foundations exposed by archaeology — they can speak eloquently about life in the gold fields. Thus, a program of living interpretation that provides for authentic reconstructions and visitor participation should be inaugurated to recreate elements of the Reed Gold Mine in its heyday. Such a program will make the site come alive for the thousands of visitors who can participate vicariously in our Nation's first gold rush.







In short, the ultimate aim of interpretation at the Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site should be to recreate a large enough section of the mine as it appeared in the nineteenth century to permit visitors to understand and appreciate aspects of life and work in the mining community. This program of restorations, archaeological excavations, reconstructions, and demonstrations should be phased in a logical manner and based upon exhaustive scholarly research. It is suggested that the site be restored as nearly as possible to the period from 1831-1855 for two reasons: There is considerable documentary information available on the period from the early 1830's to the death of John Reed in 1845, and there is far more abundant data available for the mid-1850's, including August Partz's description and drawings. Some portions of the site, however, may be restored to other periods; the reasons for this variation can be told through the interpretive program. The importance of providing demonstrations of mining techniques and of giving visitors the opportunity of experiencing the underground network cannot be overemphasized. Although the latter provision must be preceded by extensive engineering studies to assure the safety of visitors, it can be accomplished by proceeding from the simple to the more complex until the site attains its major interpretative and management objectives. It does not appear worthwhile to develop the site and deny visitors the one major experience of exploring a mine tunnel and exiting through a shaft. This seems an essential ingredient, a top priority in the extensive development phase. Such an experience can be so rewarding that the development of this new site will not be complete until visitors can actually experience some of the things that the miners endured in the halcyon days of the site.

Setting priorities for site development is not an easy task, because much needs to be done simultaneously. Expenditures for capital improvements, therefore, may be expected to be highest during the first biennium. Because the site is presently unmanned and therefore unprotected, immediate attention should be given to providing a site manager. A mobile home and a small kiosk can serve as temporary residence and office for the manager, who can thus give protection to the property and information to visitors who continue to stop at the site even while it remains closed to the public. An attractive brochure on the Reed mine, the Carolina gold rush, and plans for the site's development can be distributed. This site manager should be provided with additional personnel to begin general grounds work that need not await permanent construction. This work should include provision for a

few picnic tables and a simple walking trail across Little Meadow Creek to the mining area. Particular attention should be given to fencing or temporarily capping exposed mine shafts. This type of activity can be carried on by a small staff while the necessary buildings are being constructed. Later, additional employees will be needed.

In addition to furnishing a staff and temporary site headquarters as described above, funds should be provided during the first biennium for a visitor center-museum, exhibits and audiovisuals, site manager's residence, maintenance building, reconstruction of several facilities on Upper Hill, and other grounds development as itemized in the appendix of this plan. In the 1975-77 biennium, additional mine networks should be opened on both Upper and Lower Hills; there should be a continuation of stream clearance and trail building; and additional reconstructions, including the Lower Hill whim house, powder house, office, and a miner's cabin, should be provided. During the 1977-79 biennium, major developments should be completed: opening of the remaining tunnels in Upper Hill, construction of more foot trails, and reconstruction of the John Reed mansion house, stable, and two miners' cabins. At today's prices, it is estimated that the total physical development over the six-year period will require about 1½ million dollars. The State's return on this investment, however, can be anticipated by simple logic: It will have developed into a State historic site the only authentic re-creation by government in the United States of a nineteenth century gold mining community, and it will have brought to the attention of the American people — thousands of whom will visit the site — North Carolina's preeminent role in the early history of gold mining in the United States.

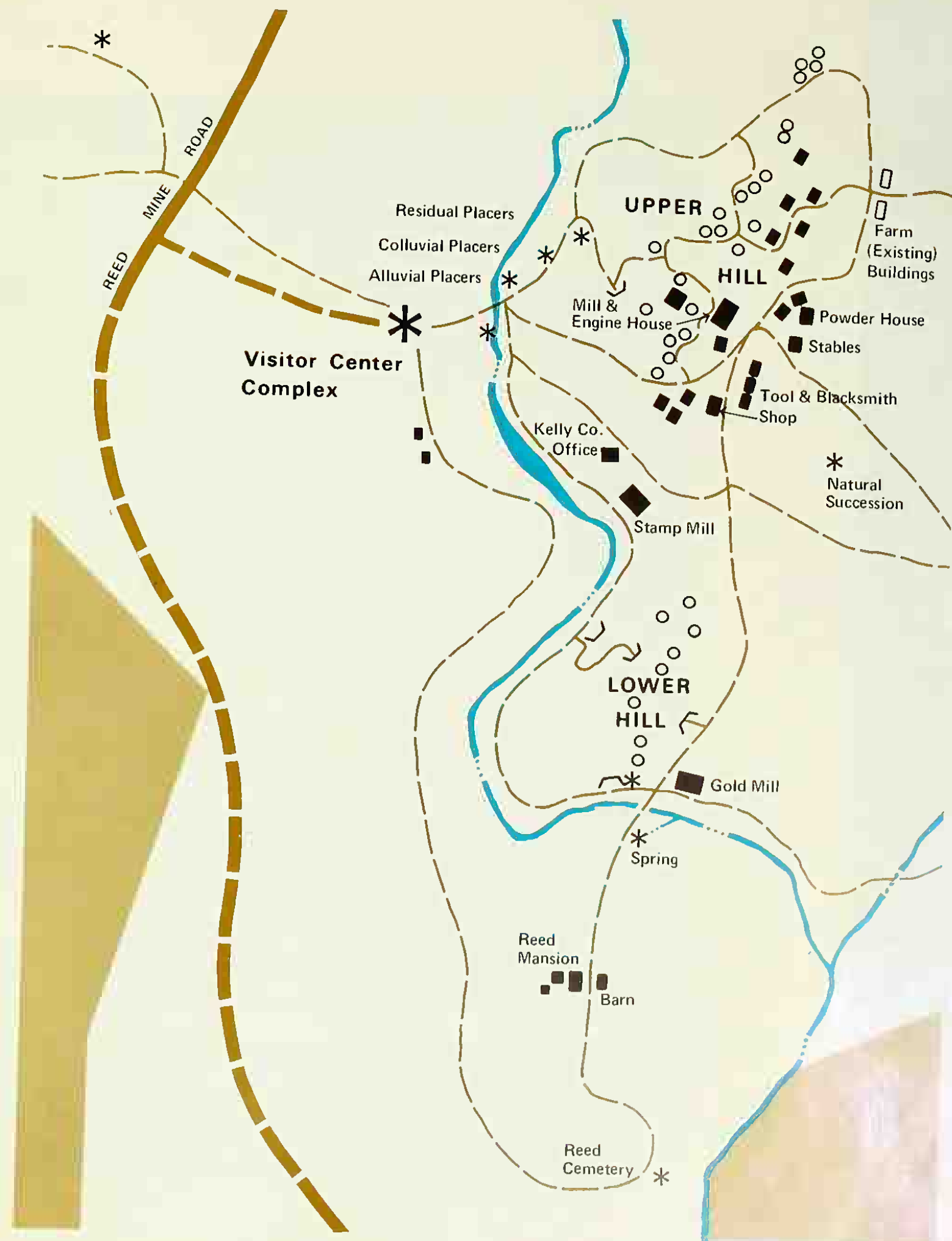
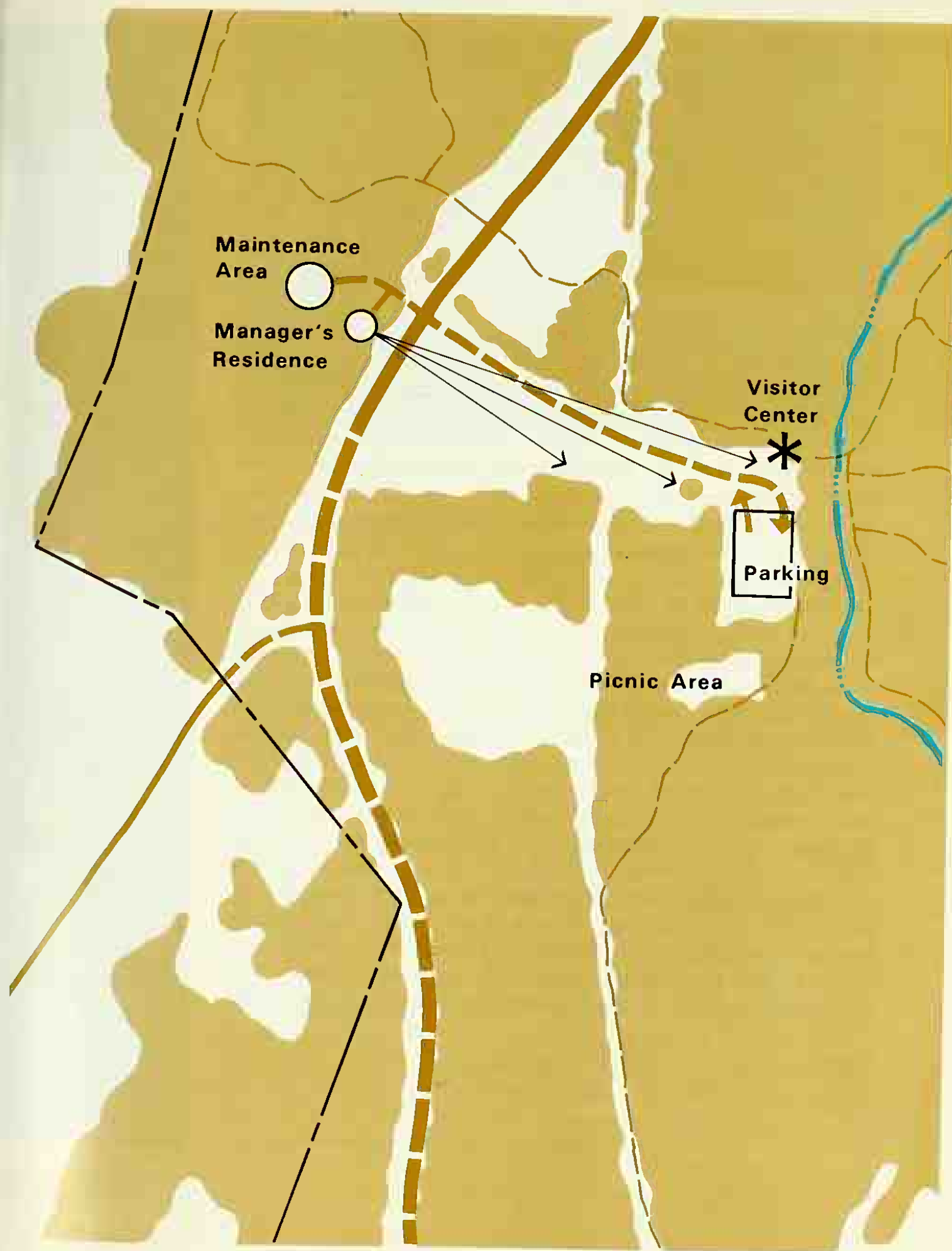
The visitor center — the first stop for a visitor — should be the transition or "decompression" zone, bridging the gap of time from man's present highly-technical age to his past, the era of rudimentary gold mining. It should include a lobby, auditorium, museum, restrooms, offices, small library, and artifacts-storage area. The building should be of a restrained design to fit into the natural setting. The side of the lobby facing the mine might well be of glass so that guides can orient the visitor to the site. A large mural depicting gold mining at the Reed Gold Mine may also be appropriate. In addition to a free information folder, a variety of items should be considered for sale here. These would include pamphlets on history, natural history, and geology; and other guides and illustrated material to facilitate exploration; and



postcards and color slides. Bruce Roberts' recently published *Carolina Gold Rush* could be on the publications shelf, as could other books, such as Peterson's *Field Guide Series*, suggested by the site's interpretive themes. A coloring book on Reed and other Carolina mines would be in order, as would a handsomely illustrated book with a working title of *Legends of the Gold Mining Country*. A nicely-done map of the works at Reed Gold Mine and a reprint of Partz's map would be good sales items, as might a game based on gold mining. Gold pans ("Reed GM"), gold nuggets and coins in replica, and other gold mining-associated souvenirs could be sold. Rock kits and an "Is it Gold?" chemistry set would also be appropriate sales items as would fine work showing the use of gold in the arts. The purpose of such sale items, of course, should be to enhance the education and enjoyment of visitors in relation to the subject of gold.

The auditorium can be used for a variety of film and slide presentations dealing with the site themes, but its major purpose will be to show a quality motion picture dealing mainly with the larger significance of gold mining in North Carolina and the Southeast. The film should reveal elements not readily apparent from a tour of the site but which are essential to a total understanding of the gold story. It is hoped that this motion picture will not be a mere recital of facts, chronologically presented, beginning with "BOOM!" and ending with "BUST." Instead, the film should capture much of the drama and excitement that characterized the gold rush and established a mood that will permit an enhanced appreciation of the site itself.

The museum in the visitor center should feature artifacts of the gold story and highlight exhibitable topics not covered in the motion picture or available in site features. For this purpose, the Department of Archives and History should intensify its efforts in the collection of manuscripts, archival materials, newspapers, photographs, and artifacts dealing with the gold story. These artifacts should be acquired, documented, preserved, and displayed for visitors. Some of these may be used during demonstrations. Others could be displayed on site or exhibited in the visitor center. Those too large or too numerous to exhibit may need to be stored for rotating displays and exhibits. An oral history program should be inaugurated to obtain the recollections of living persons who participated in or have knowledge of gold mining activities in this century. These tapes will be invaluable for both research and interpretation.



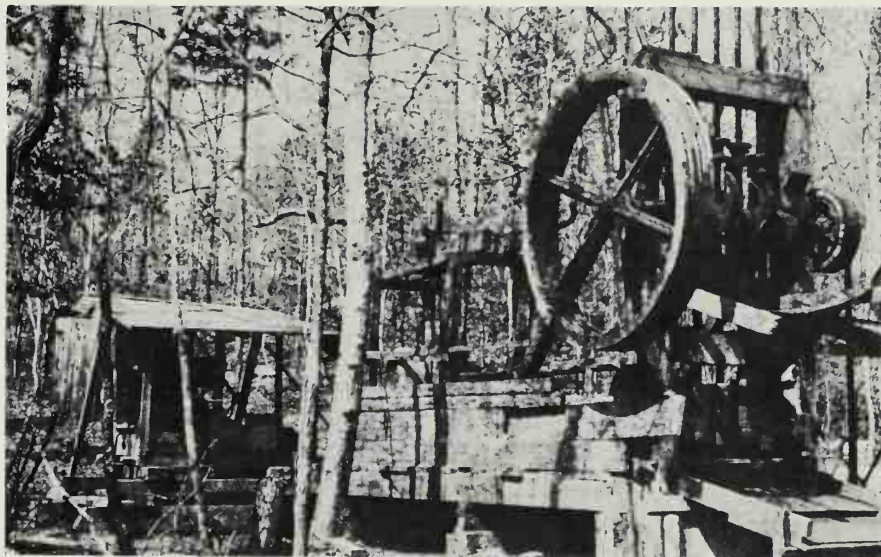
The principal exhibit at the visitor center may involve a presentation of how the quartz mining operation was conducted at the Reed Mine. The intricate system of shafts, tunnels, and other openings involved in such operations should be clearly explained to the visitor before he tours the site. Natural history exhibits should not be neglected. The most important and conspicuous plant and animal life may be shown in photos and slides.

Equipped with background and a sense of anticipation, the visitor will be ready for the "experience" trail. Near the footbridge over Little Meadow Creek, he should be introduced to the story of the discovery of gold in 1799. He will also see in this area placer (rhymes with passer) mining with rockers and gold pans. These were the earliest methods in use during the gold rush days. There were three types of placers that were mined: alluvial (stream deposits); colluvial (loose deposits near the bottom of the hills); and residual (excavated upland material). In addition to explaining the methods used, the demonstrator might point out that 135 years after Conrad Reed's discovery, in the Great Depression of the 1930's, men were again working the diggings, much as they had in earlier days.

Next the visitor will be introduced to the more sophisticated operation of quartz mining. Properly dressed with hard hat and lamp he will descend a tunnel to be for a few minutes a pseudo-miner of the 1850's. In the tunnel and in the shaft through which he exits, he will learn how miners found and extracted the gold ore. An audio message (complete with sound effects such as blasting and noise of pick axes), perhaps incorporated into the hard hat, can handle this task. A portion of the mine should be restored, and the whim house reconstructed with an open elevator system to lift visitors up the shaft. Miners in the 1850's, of course, did not use an elevator; due to anticipated visitor use and need, it is recommended, however, that one be installed in the reconstructed whim house. (If the elevator system is considered an intrusion to the historic scene, it can be located in the engine house.) Having "mined gold," the visitor then will proceed to the reconstructed mill and engine house to learn how it was processed. Hopefully, this will be an operating mill, complete with electricity to turn the stones.







Following the observance of the technical aspects of the operation, visitors will continue to the cabin area to see how miners lived in the exciting, harsh days of the gold rush. There may be early cabins still existing in the vicinity of the Reed farm that can be moved onto the site. If not, one or more should be reconstructed and refurnished to reflect the miner's way of life at Reed. (A map of the Upper Hill Works in the 1850's shows stables, powder house, office, and blacksmith shop in the area.) As above, these too should be considered for replacement or reconstruction in a long-range plan of development of the site. From Upper Hill the visitor may proceed to the reconstructed stamp mill on Middle Hill. It is recognized, of course, that research will be required to determine what the original buildings looked like, and any relocated buildings or reconstructions must meet the professional criteria of the Department of Archives and History in terms of authenticity and compatibility.

Upon completion of this tour, the visitor will have had his major experience at Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site, and he may return to his car. If, however, he has a real taste for adventure, he can spend an hour or so panning for gold on his own in the area of the footbridge. Or, after he leaves the stamp mill, he can take the Discovery Trail to portions of the Reed property that will be developed much less intensively than the Upper Hill-Middle Hill area.

Interpretation here will not focus on the 1831-1855 period but will range broadly from 1799 to the 1930's to show continuing use and development. The character of the area should generally remain overgrown to suggest ruins and provide visitors with a sense of discovery as they walk into the past. Interpreted will be mill sites, shafts, tunnels, and other features from the Middle Hill area to the Lower Hill area. An optional trail should lead visitors to the site of the John Reed House and cemetery. Interpretation will be via leaflet and markers.

These trails also offer an opportunity to stress environmental values. At the Lower Hill, effects of a mine dump on vegetation can be explained. Mine tailings contain large amounts of copper and silver. These residues are toxic to most of the important forest tree species, and the mine dumps support communities in which red cedar and princess tree predominate. Here, then, will be an opportunity to explain a form of land pollution that is characteristic of most mining operations.

A program of costumed demonstrations should be inaugurated, starting in a small way and expanding as experience dictates. Opportunities will abound, particularly as the number of visitors increases. Placer mining and the use of rocker and pan have been mentioned. A loaded ore wagon should be in evidence. Demonstrators can show how miners used their tools. Hollowed-out logs were often used as rockers, and these were frequently made on the spot; a demonstrator can build one. Women often worked the rockers while the men dug the grit out of the placer deposits; women demonstrators for this sort of activity should then be in order. The more sophisticated processing at the mill on the Upper Hill offers additional opportunities for demonstration. The refurnished cabins suggest others, such as nineteenth-century cooking and homemaking tasks. A reconstructed blacksmith shop provides another. Historians say that around the camps there were usually whiskey carts or huckster wagons, with cider, liquor, provisions, and other articles for sale to the miners. There can be a huckster wagon available with such items for visitors to see or purchase. Research also suggests that the miners often camped outdoors – three or four together under a few blankets stretched across poles – with only the branches of trees to provide the roof of a shelter. A demonstrator can elucidate this mode of living. A “miner” with rock samples might talk in layman’s terms about the geology of mining. Old-time (authentic) gold miners, placed on the site staff (or working as volunteers) can add

immeasurably to the quality of the personal service and demonstration aspects of the site's programs.

A partial list of interpretive themes to be considered, some of which have been outlined above, is given below. The following topics should be evaluated for inclusion in the interpretive programs:

- Early interest in (and attempts to locate) the supposedly rich gold mines in the Southeast.
- Conrad Reed's discovery in 1799, the 1803 nugget recovery, and the gradual spread of interest throughout the State until the mid-1820's.
- The period of the first gold rush and the development and stabilization of the industry down to 1837.
- The establishment of the Branch Mint at Charlotte and the Bechtler's private mint at Rutherfordton, and the exploitation of the mines down to the desertion for the California fields in 1849.
- The intrafamily lawsuit, 1834-1844.
- Revival of interest in gold mines in North Carolina prior to the Civil War.
- The effect of the Civil War on gold mining in the Southeast.
- Post-Civil War developments in the mining and processing of gold in the Southeast.
- The 1896 nugget discovery and the short-lived excitement.
- Gold mining revival in the days of the Great Depression.
- The influence of gold mining in the Southeast on the economies and monetary systems of the States involved and on the United States.
- The lure of gold: Its meaning in world history.



- The geology of gold.
- The Germans in Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Rowan Counties, North Carolina.
- Methods of mining and refining gold.
- Life at the gold mines (owners and workers and their families).
- Gold "boom towns" (e.g., Gold Hill and Brindletown).
- Legends of the gold mines.
- Black Americans in the mines.
- Women at the mines.
- Immigrants in the mines, 1840-1890.
- Mining disasters (e.g., Barringer Mine, 1904).
- Stellar personalities involved in the North Carolina gold story.
- The natural history of the region.
- Other cultural-historic aspects of the region.
- The region as a backdrop for the teaching of environmental values.

The Schedule of interpretive development for this site may be summed up in the statement by Lao-Tze, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."

The resources of the site are rich in almost every conceivable facet of education, information, and interpretation. They involve pre-history, history, geology, natural history, and ecology. Here are the tools for teaching man about himself, the world in which he lives, his progress, and prospects for future success in a changing world. The tangible and intangible assets of this microcosm are unparalleled.

In the event that the large eastern portion of the Reed property, not involved in the mine's operations, is transferred to another State agency for development as a recreational park, the following recommendations may be adjusted accordingly by the Department of Archives and History. Even so, the historic site should contain extensive foot trails in the mine area, and picnic areas should be provided.

An estimated 10 miles of trails can be planned in the eastern portion alone for the interpretation of cultural and natural history and environmental values. Each trail should be made up of a series of loops to provide for varying lengths of trips so the visitor will not have to retrace any area which he has already experienced. Existing roads and trails should be utilized whenever possible to minimize construction costs and adverse environmental impact.

Cooperative programs should be sought by the site staff with neighboring school systems, colleges and universities, schools for the handicapped, park and recreation departments, historical societies, and private organizations. The thrust of these programs should be to use all resources for environmental awareness, thus spreading the diffusion of knowledge rather than confining use to one location, period, or subject.

The eastern section of the property lends itself well to an environmental study area, suitable for school use. It could be reserved in summer months for organizations such as the Salvation Army, Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls, and used as an environmental education center in the spring and fall. If the need justifies, the facilities may then be winterized for year-round use.

Special-interest groups, such as dignitaries, foreign visitors, family groups, the aged, the handicapped, and the disadvantaged, should also be encouraged to use the environmental study areas. Information and maps to acquaint these visitors with the intent and resources of the area should be available at the visitor center.

## MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Site operation and management programs constantly should be revised to take into account people's needs and the changing natural conditions within the area. Thus site planning becomes a continuous refinement of programs as new knowledge of the resource becomes available. As the pattern of visitor activities develops, a careful evaluation of the resource must be made to measure the tolerance of the soil and vegetation to human use. Future visitor needs and activities may require new and varied techniques for interpretive and recreational management.

Historic sites are for the education, enjoyment, and benefit of all the people. Therefore it is imperative that undue noise, visual disturbances, and/or overconcentration of people do not distract from present visitor enjoyment or destroy the resource for future visitor use.

It is important to recognize that the character of an area is dependent upon that which occurs beyond its own boundaries. An attempt should be made to tie the Gold Rush Story, the Revolutionary War's Southern Campaign, and the Civil War together so that the visitors may follow the course of these events by visiting Federal, State, and other related sites in sequence if they so desire. Caravans and/or historic motor routes could be developed. Visitors to this region need information about other historic sites, tourist attractions, recreation facilities, services, and accommodations. Information-orientation kiosks, or exhibit panels, should be located on various approach roads to serve as supplements to the State's welcome centers located on the interstate highways. All plans require a close working relationship with the State and local travel bureaus, public media, chambers of commerce, and State Highway Department. Through such a cooperative effort, information can be distributed widely and mutually benefit all parties.

Areas such as the Howie Mill should also be considered. This site is presently in private ownership. It consists of an unusual group of buildings which house much of the old equipment used to refine ore from many North and South Carolina mines. Efforts should be made to document the processing methods and layout. Sufficient reason may be found to preserve the mill and open it as a technological museum. If this is not feasible, organizations such as the Smithsonian may be induced into acquiring some of the equipment.



## COOPERATIVE PLANNING

A cooperative planning effort with the National Park Service, South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, North Carolina Department of Natural and Economic Resources, and other concerned agencies and organizations is essential to achieve a harmonious and unified leisure-oriented region.

The Department of Archives and History and officials of Cabarrus and Stanly counties should cooperate in planning and development. Agreements on urban development, zoning, and transportation should be made so that the integrity of the site is ensured and maximum enjoyment with minimal environmental damage may be achieved. Close coordination among all concerned private and public organizations is a necessity for rational land-use planning.

## CONCLUSION

With the rising pressures of urbanization as well as the increase in leisure time for everyone, open space, parks, and historic sites are becoming increasingly necessary. Admittedly, a "weekend" site experience is only a partial solution to this growing demand for an escape from a technocratic society. However, a historic site can offer better solutions, with careful planning, for the larger needs of man, for in a historic area there is an opportunity to foster a deeper understanding and awareness of the intrinsic values of life — physical, mental, and cultural — that result from an in-depth experience in the "natural" world.

The Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site offers a unique opportunity for the State of North Carolina to provide to its citizens and out-of-state visitors a respite from the pressures of modern living. Although the site itself will demonstrate technological development in the gold mining industry, the visitor will be able to experience history leisurely and in a natural setting far away from the humdrum of urban existence. On a large tract of land that has been spared the scars of bulldozers and modern intrusions, he will be transported vicariously to another era when the glitter of gold and dreams of wealth captured the imagination of thousands of Americans and foreigners who abandoned their homes and followed the lure to the gold fields of North Carolina. He will walk

the same hills and tunnels that John Reed and his kinsmen trod on this family-operated mine site; he will see through audio and visual mediums the story of the first gold rush in the United States, the vicissitudes of those who caught "gold fever," the excitement of a gold strike, the pathos of desertion of the Piedmont mines for the promised land of California, and the pride of North Carolinians who had endured the derogatory nickname "Rip Van Winkle State." He will see demonstrations of various gold mining techniques and perhaps participate in them. He will stand on the spot where a 23-pound nugget was found as late as 1896, and he will guess just where it was in Little Meadow Creek that Conrad Reed found that shiny rock in 1799. At John Reed's grave he will ponder the thoughts of that German immigrant who deserted the British army — how he tilled the rocky soil, reacted to the strange rock that he used as a doorstep, gladly accepted \$3.50 from the Fayetteville jeweler, and cursed at his naivety when he learned that it was worth so much more. He may even pause to consider how John Reed felt on that day in 1842 when, at the age of 85, he finally took his oath of allegiance as a citizen of the country in which his name was to become familiar through this historic site.

All these and many other experiences will be open to future visitors to the Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site. The potential is not only enormous; it is also exciting — exciting not just to those who will visit the site, but particularly exciting for those who carry out this master plan.







# appendixes

## A: VISITOR DISTRIBUTION

Growth in population is generating more historic sites visitors. Unfortunately, however, there will continue to be a predominance of people who cannot or will not take advantage of the opportunities afforded at historic sites—some because of lack of funds for transportation, other because of lack of time for long distance travel.

Suburban commuters, who devote eight to ten hours per week going to and from work, have time schedules that leave only weekend time for suburban activities such as yardwork and home maintenance. At best, their recreational time is limited to weekends, half-days, and evenings. Planners must provide meaningful, efficient opportunities for the remaining recreational time for this group. Thus historic sites must be “brought to the people” in areas such as the Reed Gold Mine.

The uses of the site’s resources by the general visitor who comes for education and recreation are difficult to predict and control. Within social mores of freedom-of-choice, too much regulation of use is oppressive and counter-productive to the purposes that warranted the area’s creation. However, resources must still be protected from misuse and overuse; accordingly, the problem becomes one of controlling the quality and quantity of use by proper development, interpretation, maintenance, and non-arbitrary and uncapricious regulations. In this light it is necessary to develop a knowledge of a resource’s carrying capacity and the way people will freely use it.

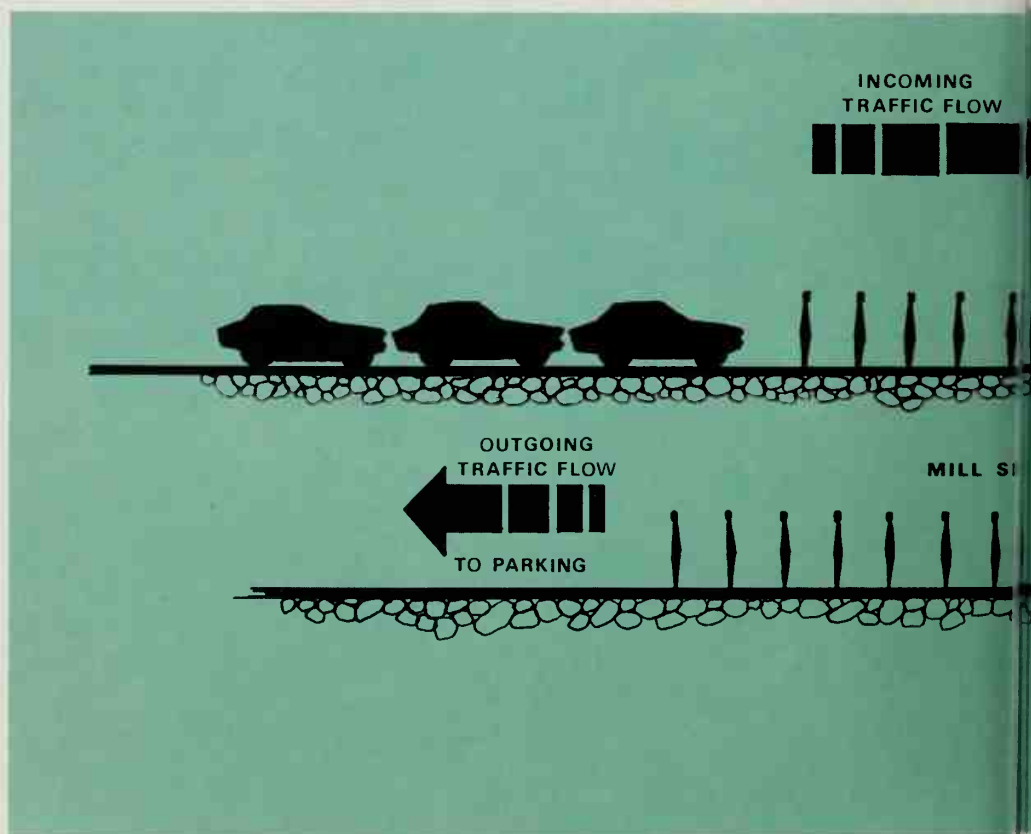
An average of two hours' use per visit is considered the ideal daily level of use at Reed Gold Mine. Use in excess of two visitor-hours will be considered acceptable so long as there is no irreversible ill effect on resources, interpretation, and maintenance.

We are continually threatened with the possibility of limiting use. There are ways to prevent — or at least delay — such a restrictive move. Much of the delaying potential is directly related to limiting the use of private vehicles within historic sites.

During the past 50 years of park development, facilities have been almost completely automobile oriented. We cannot change this orientation overnight. It will take years to rearrange the facilities so that visitor access, visitor circulation, and supplies and services can be provided without private cars and other highway vehicles.

The Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site offers approximately 822 acres of historical and natural areas free from automobile traffic. By adding a major visitor facility and an environmental day-use area to the existing network of State and county roads, peripheral access may be achieved — the first step in the concept of decentralization for the site.

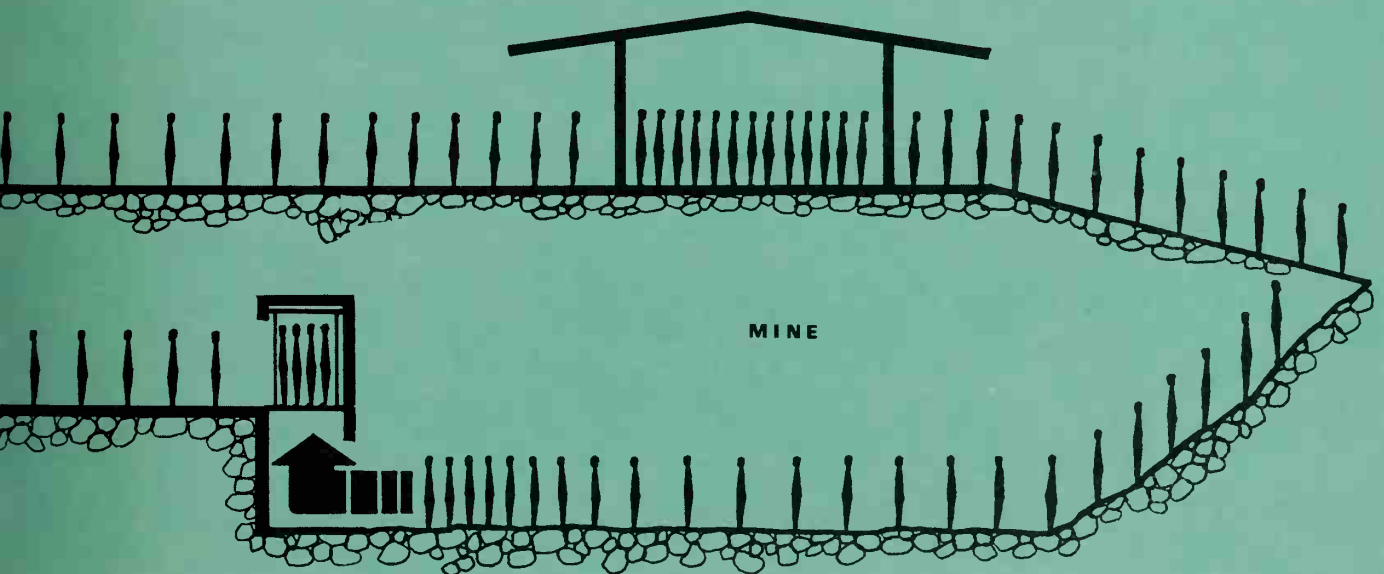
VISITOR FLOW  
PATTERN





During peak visitation hours, people enter a site in a constant flow of movement, but when a specific attraction or scheduled service has been set up, this causes an interruption. A comfortable, interesting space must be provided where visitors may gather while waiting for the beginning of the scheduled event. Here, as visitors wait for a few moments, devices of significant import should be available for their enjoyment so that they will not become tired or bored. After the featured attraction is concluded, the departing group should also be able to view at random exhibits, displays, or similar attractions as they disperse again into small groups.

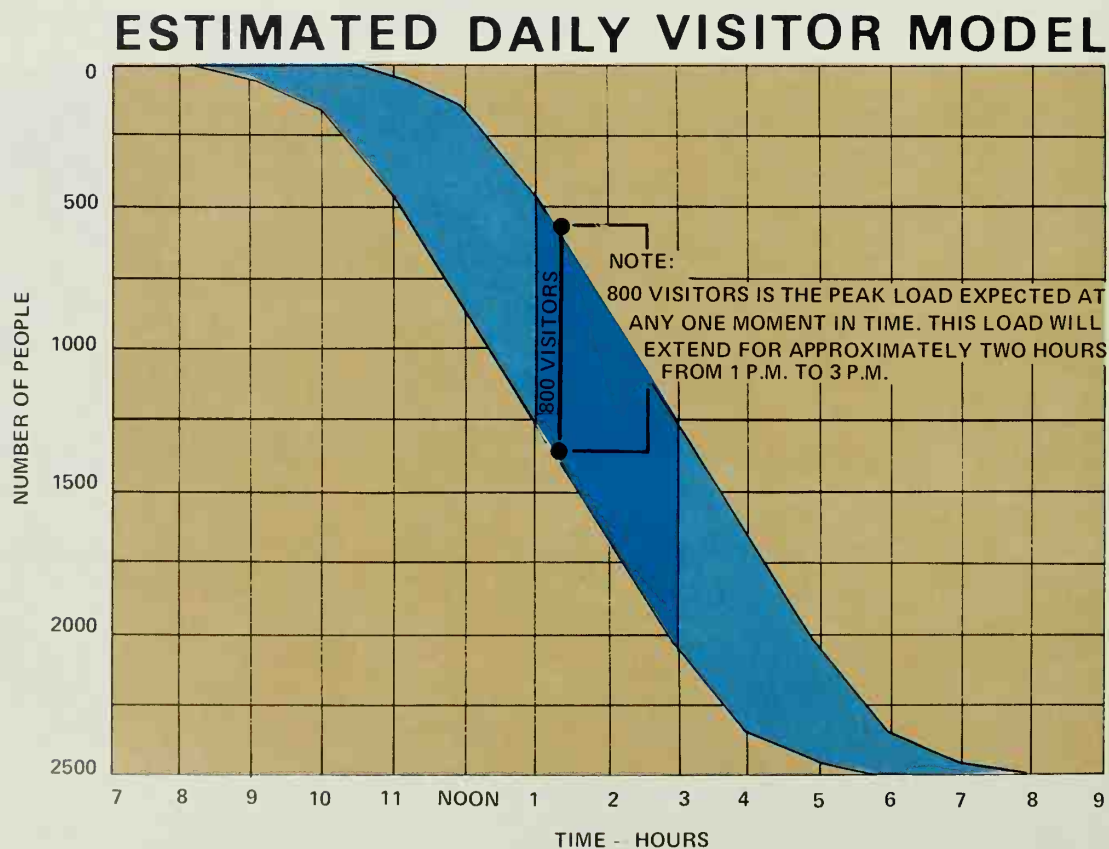
Shown in the example below is an exhibit area used as a reservoir, or "waiting area," for the beginning of the next showing of a 15-minute motion picture. At the conclusion of the performance, visitors will leave the theater through the exhibit area and walk past the placer mining demonstrations. A zone of awareness is created as they pass through these areas, enabling them once again to go at their own pace, thus forming an even, constant flow. By guiding visitor movement in such a manner, a fragile resource may be used more effectively for a meaningful visitor experience while, at the same time, providing some protection for perpetuation of the resource.



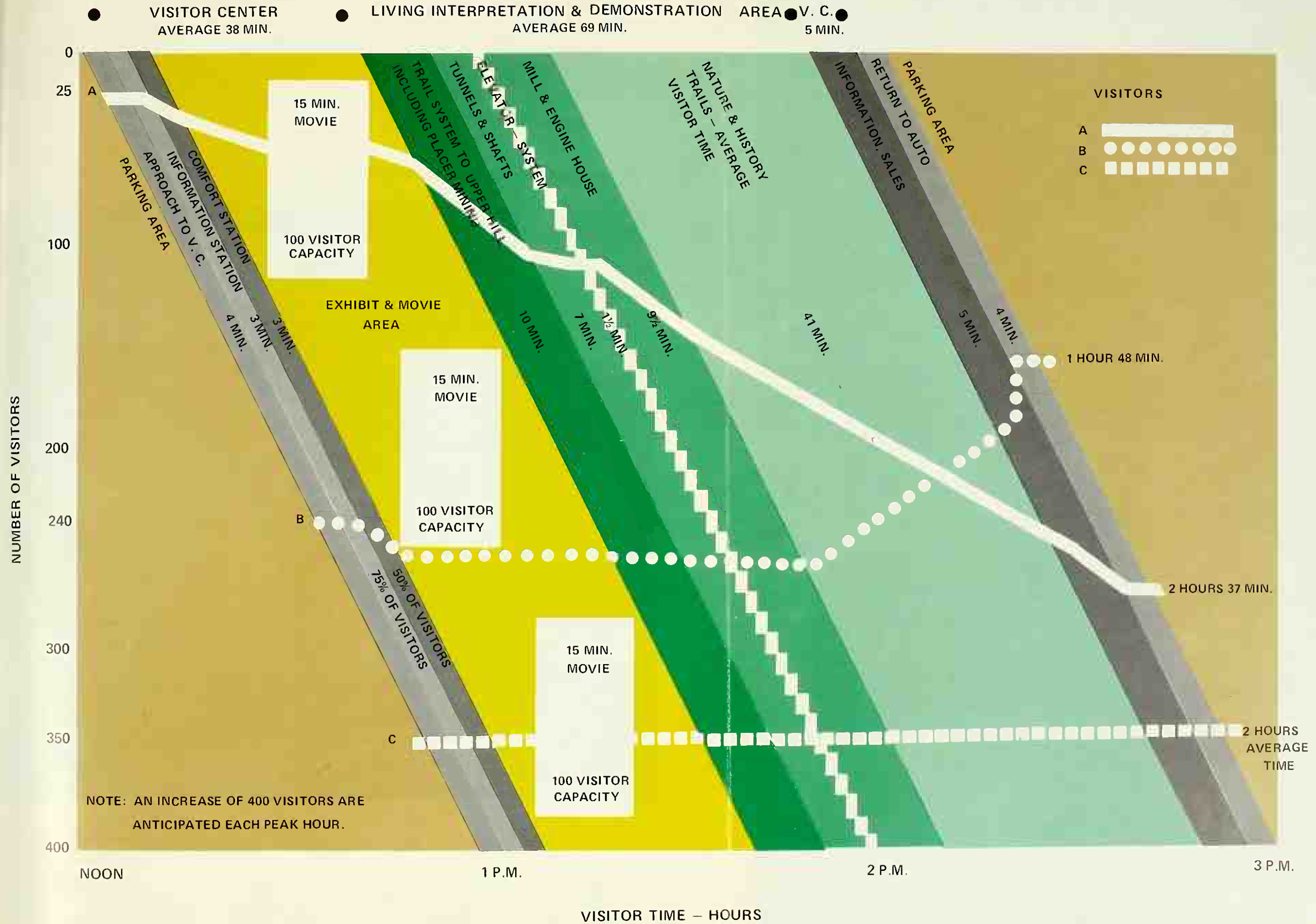
The capacity-use model indicates the carrying capacities of the majority of the individual resources and developments in the historic site. Also shown, however, is that two hours is not enough time for a visitor to see all of the area. The daily visitation model indicates that 400 people per hour could use the site during a heavy visitor-use hour.

Transferring these two hours into walking distance, a round-trip hike covers a radius of only three miles. Visitors who make an effort to arrive early, and/or stay late, will be able to walk beyond the three miles.

From any pedestrian departure point, 60 percent of the visitors who hike will stay within one mile, up to 75 percent within two miles, 85 percent within three miles, etc. These trails are also designed on a loop system based on the visitor-time factor. Thus the visitor will not have to retrace any area which he has already experienced. There are no management programs or fences that will protect a resource and regulate visitor use of a natural remote area as effectively as a visitor-time factor.



# CAPACITY USE MODEL





## B: ESTIMATED DEVELOPMENT COSTS

### Roads and Trails

Park Entrance Road — .25 Mile	\$ 25,000
Parking Area — 250 Cars — 2.5 acres	150,000
Foot Trails — 10 Miles	45,000
Gravel "Maintenance" Roads — 2 Miles	40,000
Obliteration of Gravel Road — 1 Mile	10,000
	\$ 270,000

### Buildings, Utilities and Misc.

Visitor Orientation Building & Museum (6,400 SF)	\$ 320,000
Entrance Sign & Grounds Development	15,000
Audiovisual Development (Film, Displays, Etc.)	50,000
Opening of Upper Workings	330,000
Opening of Lower Workings	90,000
Reconstruct Whim Houses (2)	15,000
Reconstruct Engine House and Mill	100,000
Reconstruct Miners' Cabins (3)	40,000
Reconstruct Office	15,000
Reconstruct Powder House	30,000
Reconstruct Stable	10,000
Reconstruct Stamp Mill	30,000
Reconstruct Rocker Pan	5,000
Reconstruct Reed Mansion House	90,000
Picnic Area — 50 Sites	25,000

Manager's Residence	25,000
Maintenance Building – 2,000 SF	40,000
Maintenance Equipment	10,000
Water Supply	30,000
Sewage Disposal	55,000
Electrical Service	10,000
Stream Work – 3 Miles	60,000
Wayside Exhibits	12,000
Mobile Home (temporary home/office)	6,000
Artifact Purchase	10,000
Archaeological Contract Work	15,000
	<b>\$ 1,428,000</b>

#### **Total Development Costs**

Roads & Trails	270,000
Buildings, Utilities and Miscellaneous	1,438,000
	<hr/>
	<b>\$ 1,708,000</b>

## C: RECOMMENDED BIENNIAL PERSONAL SERVICES AND SUPPORTING COSTS

### Management

Position	Effective	7/1/73-75 1st Biennium	7/1/75-77 2nd Biennium
1 Historic Site Manager @ \$11,000/year*	7-1-73	\$22,000	\$22,000
1 Administrative Aide @ \$6,000/year*	7-1-73	12,000	12,000
1 Researcher @ \$9,000/year*	7-1-74	9,000	18,000
1 Interpretive Specialist @ \$6,000/year*	7-1-74	6,000	12,000
1 Historic Site Assistant @ \$6,000/year*	7-1-75	0	12,000
2 Seasonal Guides @ \$1,500/season*	7-1-74	3,000	6,000
2 Seasonal Guides @ \$1,500/season*	7-1-75	0	6,000
Personal Services (80%)		\$52,000	\$88,000
Supporting Costs (20%)		15,500	22,000
		\$67,500	\$110,000

\*Figures include Social Security and retirement contributions.



Maintenance	Effective	1st Biennium	2nd Biennium
1 Grounds Maintenance Foreman @ \$8,000/year*	7-1-73	\$16,000	\$ 16,000
1 Grounds Maintenance Man @ \$7,500/year*	1-1-74	11,250	15,000
2 Laborers @ \$5,000/year*	7-1-74	10,000	20,000
2 Seasonal Laborers @ \$1,500/season*	7-1-75	0	6,000
Personal Services (60%)		<u>\$37,250</u>	\$ <u>57,000</u>
Supporting Costs (40%)		<u>24,840</u>	<u>38,000</u>
		<u>\$62,090</u>	\$ <u>95,000</u>

Recommended Staffing		Man Years	
Permanent Employees	Effective	1st Biennium	2nd Biennium
Historic Site Manager	7-1-73	2	2
Administrative Aide	7-1-73	2	2
Researcher	7-1-74	1	2
Interpretive Specialist	7-1-74	1	2
Historic Site Assistant	7-1-75	0	2
Grounds Maintenance Foreman	7-1-73	2	2
Grounds Maintenance Man	1-1-74	1.5	2
Laborer	7-1-74	2	4
		<u>11.5</u>	<u>18</u>
Seasonal Employees			
Guide	7-1-74	2	4
Guide	7-1-75	0	4
Laborer	7-1-75	0	4
		<u>2</u>	<u>12</u>

## UTILITIES

### Electricity

Overhead power, supplied by the Union rural cooperative with offices in Monroe, is available within the site. Power must be extended to the visitor facility and to the equipment at the upper workings. In order to maintain a visitor awareness of being in a historic place it is recommended that all power lines within the site boundaries be placed underground.

### Water

Potable water for visitor use will probably best be provided from a well near the visitor facility, with storage provided in a hydro-pneumatic tank.

### Sewage

Since Little Meadow Creek experiences periods of little or no flow and since much visitor activity will occur in and along that creek, discharge of conventionally treated sewage into it does not seem to be feasible; therefore, sub-surface disposal appears to be necessary. Treatment in an underground aerobic plant plus chlorination is recommended before sub-surface disposal. The infiltration field should be located so that seepage into the creek is ruled out.

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## PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

Opposite page 1 —

From inside shaft of the Reed Gold Mine.

Credit: State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N. C.

Page 6 —

Little Meadow Creek.

Credit: Lawson Bond Studio — May 2, 1971.

Page 14 —

Mat Mayle and Nicky Travetham.

Credit: "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," — August 1857.

Page 17 —

Bill Jenkins, miner at the Gold Hill region of North Carolina.

Credit: "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," — August 1857.

Page 18 —

Rocking cradles at Gold Hill, 1850's.

Credit: "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," — August 1857.

Page 19 —

Miner with bucket at mouth of bucket shaft.

Credit: "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," — August 1857.

Page 23 —

Today's remains of the stamp mill on Middle Hill.

Credit: Lawson Bond Studio.

Page 24 —

Sluice mining at Reed Gold Mine in the Depression of the 30's.

Credit: *The Carolina Gold Rush*, Bruce Roberts.

Page 25 —

Mine Mill and engine house, Upper Hill, early 1900's,

Left — Dr. John F. Reed. Right — Mack Cox.

Credit: Lawson Bond Studio, Concord & Progress, 1971.

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A modern panner in Little Meadow Creek.

Credit: *The Carolina Gold Rush*, Bruce Roberts.

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Tunnel at Reed Gold Mine.

Credit: State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N. C.

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A visitor descends a shaft at Reed Gold Mine.

Credit: Lawson Bond Studio.

Page 45 —

A miner ascends in a bucket in the mine shaft 1857.

Credit: "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," — August 1857.

Page 45 —

Stamp mill at nearby Bosts Mill, 1934.

Credit: J. T. Pardee, 1934.

Page 54 —

A gold miner.

Credit: *The Carolina Gold Rush*, Bruce Roberts.



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